

**Modernist Literature and the Concept of Space**

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## **Declaration**

I declare that:

- this thesis has been composed by me, the candidate
- the work contained in this thesis is my own
- this work has not been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification except as specified



## **Abstract**

This thesis attempts to reassess the relevance of the concept of space in the modernist period. To complete this reassessment I take an interdisciplinary approach, in which I offer a series of snapshots of different cultural symptoms of shifts in the space concept at this time. I have selected these snapshots because they either stem from, relate to or interrogate the capitalist economic system in a relatively explicit way. My central argument is that while we tend to think of postmodern or late phase capitalism as primarily operating through an ordering of space, we intuitively think of the rapidly developing economic system of the modernist period as being structured around time. I argue that it is possible to offer an alternative history that sees capitalism as always a spatial endeavour, and to suggest that the spatial nature of the modernist period has been partially hidden from view by the temporalising tendencies of philosophy, Marxist social theory and the social sciences throughout the twentieth century. I suggest that the cultural output of the modernist avant-garde operates as a kind of barometer of the true spatial nature of the modernist period, offering an illumination of the way in which the capitalist system was reconfiguring social life at this time. I focus on the paintings and pasted paper works of Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque, on the newspapers and advertisements of the modernist period, and on novels by James Joyce and Virginia Woolf in particular, in addition to those by Dorothy Richardson, Joseph Conrad, George Orwell and Alfred Döblin.

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## Chapter One

### Modernist Capitalist Spaces

#### Spatial vs. Temporal Modernity

The Oxford English Dictionary's definition of the word "space" includes, in the first instance, a reference to the application of the word in the temporal realm. Space, it is suggested, has as one of its primary conceptual purposes the capacity to denote the space between two points, essentially an interval of time: "Lapse or extent of time between two points, events, etc. Usu. with qualifying adjective, as *long, short, small* etc." (OED). Another important element of the definition concerns opportunity, where space is afforded for the completion of an action, an action that will unfold, of course, in time: "Time that is not committed or limited, the opportunity to do something" (OED). This struggle to pin down the multiple meanings of space demonstrates the inevitable vacillation between the terms "space" and "time" that is the product of any attempt to define them. For the Dictionary, the space between two points is a time, and the time taken to move from one point to another is a traversal of space. Action itself unfolds through, or within, both space and time. Doreen Massey has cautioned that many writers evoke the term or concept of space haphazardly, presuming it to be stable, and thus make little attempt to explore its multiple meanings, and the implications of these for any coherent argument, in conceptual or practice-oriented terms (Massey 66). It may be that such an omission has more to do with reticence than critical neglect, and that this reticence stems from an anxiety around the slipperiness of the term "space" itself, and its seemingly inextricable entanglement with notions of time. This entanglement is produced by the operation of both space and time as co-creators of a theatre of human action. In the Kantian view, as factors facilitating and grounding human perception, space and time have a meaningful interrelationship and a mutual reliance, and form the basis of activity; they give that activity an opportunity. The OED has therefore opted for an interpretation of time, space and their complex connections that adheres closely to what seems an intuitive human understanding of the way that they operate in the structuring of daily life.

In the modernist period and beyond, the battle lines are drawn between thinkers (be they scientific, philosophical, political or artistic) who leave such intuitive notions in place, and those that seek to explore the relationship between space and human experience in a way that rocks the ontological foundations of existence. In the ensuing trans-decade conceptual

brawl, the interconnections between the aforementioned areas of thought are also called into question, as scientists grapple with theories of space-time and of dimensions never before conceived, philosophers contemplate the nature of artistic space, and artists engage in the politics of a spatial economy.<sup>1</sup> Viewing either time or space in the ascendant over its apparently inexorably twinned experiential partner has serious consequences at a cultural, political, social and ultimately ontological level. Yet despite the seeming impossibility of separating these two terms, past epochs of thought have commonly construed their interconnection as a relationship between a dominant and a recessive term. This thesis will argue that the modernist period is one which much subsequent criticism has seen as dominated by changing attitudes toward time, at the expense of clarity around the truly spatial nature of experience under a developing capitalist economy. By refocusing attention on spatial shifts within the period, it aims to place modernist literature of the avant-garde in a new position – one which sees it exploring and interrogating, as a vital endeavour, the new spaces of modernist life. Modernist scientific, philosophical and political thought in part supports such a temporocentric reading of the period. Yet analyses of space within postmodern Marxist geography and critical social theory have shown this spatial subsumption in modernist criticism, and the temporocentrism of some modernist thought, to be erroneous. The turn toward the spatial in these Marxist and critical social analyses of late phase capitalism<sup>2</sup> reveals not only the role of space in the continued development of the economic system, but also its artificial suppression in understandings of the preceding, modernist, period.

In fact, an analysis of space moves the relationship between modernism and postmodernism away from a matter of historical succession, and toward a transition between different but connected conceptualisations of the operation of space, prompted by the needs of the dominant mode of production in each “period.” As Fredric Jameson puts it, “A certain spatial turn has often seemed to offer one of the more productive ways of distinguishing post-modernism from modernism proper, whose experience of temporality [. . .] it is henceforth conventional to see as a dominant of the high modern” (*Postmodernism* 154). While subsequent critical analysis often places time centre stage in the modernist period, and while temporality is indeed a focus of interest at this time, as outlined below, it is not the

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<sup>1</sup> The debate could cause upset and outrage. Wyndham Lewis suggests, in *Time and Western Man* (1927), that, through the focus on time in recent scientific and philosophical thinking, space was at the risk of irrelevance: “*Space* is rapidly [. . .] becoming the ‘Nothing’ of the modern European” (Lewis 418). A sorry state of affairs, given his own preference for space (Lewis 147).

<sup>2</sup> This term denotes the economic system of the West post-1960s, and is drawn from Jameson, *Postmodernism*, who in turn borrows the phrase from Mandel, *Late Capitalism*.

case that all modernist thought remained unaware of the crucial and evolving role of space in social life. Many of those producing avant-garde cultural material at this time demonstrate a fascination with the spatial. This fascination does not equate to neglecting temporality – the OED indicates that space and time cling to one another through philosophical analysis, preventing a complete severance between the two concepts. However, by exploring space, these modernist writers and artists anticipate the spatial sensitivities of postmodern criticism and recognise the fundamental link between space and economics at a time when this connection was becoming consolidated.

The OED lists space “with reference to area” subsequent to its definitions “with reference to time” (OED). It seems that time is in the ascendant in this dictionary’s understanding, leading the way in the shaping of human activity. In this secondary set of definitions, extension and the facilitation of action are again key points. Definition 7b) is of particular interest, referring to “The place where one takes up a position, residence etc.” (OED). The relationship between, and differences defining, space and place is another key philosophical issue impinging upon a true understanding of the concept of space. The mention of “residence” also throws up questions around inhabitation and dwelling, familiar from the thinking of Martin Heidegger.<sup>3</sup> The notion of position in turn introduces the issue of proxemics<sup>4</sup> and the gestural behaviours of the human body, and moves toward the implication that space might be generated by, as well as generative of or prescriptive toward, the body. It suggests that, far from being simply one of the two enabling factors in the creation of a theatre of human action, space is created by the body that performs that action, occurring as a consequence of performance. Working with a phenomenological heritage, an essentially Marxist understanding of the significance of social practice, and a resistance toward the artificially pure historicism of a materialist philosophy, Henri Lefebvre exposes the importance of the human body in an understanding of and possible resistance to the operations of capitalist space in the contemporary world. His work, in particular that contained in The Production of Space, offers a striking vision of the relationship between economics and the structuration of space in a capitalist society. It thus speaks to the concerns of modernist artists and writers who, while dealing with an earlier phase of the market economy, presciently concur with several of Lefebvre’s observations.

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<sup>3</sup> See Heidegger, “Building Dwelling Thinking”; Heidegger, “...Poetically Man Dwells...”.

<sup>4</sup> For a definition of proxemics relevant to the phenomenological thinking of Maurice Merleau-Ponty, and thence of Lefebvre, see Hall.



The Dictionary goes on to talk of limited, demarcated and apportioned space, the space of enclosure or control familiar largely from the work of Michel Foucault.<sup>5</sup> A car parking space is suggested as an example of empty space, but on a broader conceptual level, the possibility of space as empty and awaiting filling by matter has been problematic through the ages, from Aristotelian container theory onwards. The metaphysical definition of space offered refers to “Continuous, unbounded, or unlimited extension in every direction, regarded as void of, or without reference to, matter” (OED). Perhaps gesturing toward the Cartesian notion of *res extensa*, the definition does not enter into the conceptual problematic involved in thinking of empty space.<sup>6</sup> The OED lists areas of human endeavour in which the term “space” has a particular relevance or resonance: typography, newspapers, telecommunications, and mathematics. In considering the space concept in the modernist period, this thesis will consider all of these issues, central as they are to the epoch. In fact, the modernist period is witness to radical change in all of these space-connected arenas, underscoring the central importance of space at this time.

Seeking out the words with which the term space is associated,<sup>7</sup> the reader of the OED will eventually reach the concept of “space myopia,” which is defined as “the tendency of the eye to focus at a close distance when looking into featureless space” (OED). Confronted with expansivity, the human brain instructs the eye to focus on a more manageable scale, on spaces, divisions and the conceivable, rather than on the conceptual challenge of vastness. This reflects the historical reluctance or inability of philosophers to conceive of a truly empty space, devoid of matter, ether or orientation. It also reflects the related human tendency, here catalogued as an aberrant behaviour, to look for close spatial structuring or small spaces of experience. The intuitive human response to vastness or emptiness appears to be the creation of constructions such as the “emptiness” of the car-parking space, rather than the mental positing of limitless expansivity. Lefebvrian spatial analysis reveals that this is precisely the tendency that capitalism can make use of, as it structures, apportions and sells space. Moving beyond the parcelled space of human experience, Lefebvre can help to clarify the ways in which capitalism encourages this tendency, and makes use of this apparently intuitive leaning of the human species. While suggesting a variegated range of spaces, the economic system in fact imposes a homogeneity that seeks to bypass the perceptions of the

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<sup>5</sup> While Foucault was formerly considered to be a primarily historical theoretician, the writings of Edward W. Soja have done much to place him more firmly within a crucially space-aware tradition. See Soja 16-21.

<sup>6</sup> Stephen Kern notes, for example, the tendency in nineteenth century physics to posit an “ether” within which matter is distributed, so problematic is the thought of a truly empty space. See Kern 154.

<sup>7</sup> This process is also utilised by Marc Augé, who works with the *Grand Larousse*. See Augé 83.

human subject. This move forms a part of what a Lefebvrian reading reveals to be the attempted clandestine spatial operations of contemporary capitalism. As the subjects of this late phase capitalist economy, human beings suffer from a kind of spatial myopia that has long remained undisturbed, due to what Edward W. Soja sees as the predominance of time in philosophy, social science and critical social theory throughout much of the twentieth century. This temporalising tendency has resulted in a falsifying spatial occlusion. The spatial turn of postmodern geographers from the late 1960s onwards uncovered the artificial suppression of the spatial in the interests of the capitalist state, and the perhaps unwitting complicity of theorists working within the historical materialism of a traditional Marxist critical perspective. Yet this process has rarely been retrospectively continued in an uncovering of the spatial elements of economically driven society in the *early* twentieth century. While Soja has attempted to redress the temporal/spatial balance, in his key text Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory, his focus on postmodern examples of spatial structuring leaves him little room to explore the modernist period as itself a space-centred experience. Further, his ground-breaking analyses of the concrete or architectural spaces of the urban do not allow sufficient scope for a reading of avant-garde cultural practice in relation to his theoretical arguments. By looking briefly at the spatial turn in the postmodern period, and in the realm of philosophy and critical social theory, an appropriate conceptual apparatus can be established that aids the retrospective analysis of the modernist period, and makes possible a reading that places creators of cultural products, be they artists or writers, at the leading edge of perception regarding the changing nature of spatial experience within modernity.

Given the intentions of this thesis to refocus attention upon space as a crucial structuring feature of human experience in what is customarily referred to as the modernist period, the notion of periodisation itself becomes problematic. To think of modernism as the cultural expression of a society anchored in a particular historical time, a time which can be seen as part of a broader trajectory of chronological development, is to reinstate the temporal as the dominant factor in its conceptualisation, a move at odds with the spirit of the project. In terms of dates, this thesis can be said to begin with developments in painting in the first decade of the twentieth century, and to end with Dorothy Richardson's last, unfinished novel of the Pilgrimage sequence, on which she worked until 1954. Yet this thesis frequently finds that it is broad shifts in currents of thought that have the greatest impact on the literary texts upon which it focuses, rather than specific events tied to moments in time. What, then, might be a more appropriate way of establishing the boundaries of the modernist "period" for the



purposes of analysis? Peter Osborne, in an article named with reference to Adorno's famous claim, debates whether or not "Modernity is a Qualitative, Not a Chronological Category" (Osborne 65), and poses questions pertinent to the problematic task of defining the temporal scope of a project that seeks to focus on space. Osborne tackles three approaches to this task of definition, considering "the ideas of modernity as a *category of historical periodization*, a *quality of social experience*, and an (incomplete) *project*" (66). Dealing with modernity, of which the modernist period of course forms only a part, he draws attention to the fact that this modernity, witnessing as it does significant changes in attitude toward temporality, cannot be easily defined in terms of chronological time. He claims that "the idea of modernity itself marks a new mode of historical periodization" (68) and that "the relation between the kind of historical time occupied by modernity as an *epochal* category and that which is internal to modernity itself" must be considered (68). While Osborne appears to focus on questions of time, he foregrounds shifting attitudes to time as disruptive when attempting to establish neat historical boundaries for any epoch, ultimately concluding that "It is in the repressed spatial premises of the concept of modernity that its political logic is to be found" (74-75). The modernist cultural production with which this thesis deals will therefore be understood as historically contiguous with a shift in the premises and operations of space, a shift which may be attributed to the early twentieth century. This period may be seen as a section of the broader epochal category of modernity, which itself contains a radical revision of the "quality of historical time itself" (Osborne 75), in which the epoch becomes orientated not toward its predecessor in a system of chronological succession, but toward the future, a "qualitatively new, self-transcending temporality" (Osborne 73) that highlights the radical potential of its thought and cultural practices.

Whatever the problems involved in establishing the parameters of cultural modernism and the time of its historical appearance, it may be suggested that the modernist period's own predominant socio-ideological frame configured a society in which time was of the essence of modernity. In an era of rapid economic development, spurred on by technological invention, buoyed up by imperialism, and resulting in increasing urbanisation, economics and temporal ordering and control appeared to go hand in hand. The nineteenth century had, as Stephen Kern has outlined, paved the way for the instrumental predominance of temporality. The establishment of a standard global time in the interests of political furtherance, economic facility and general efficiency, was central among such developments. The 1884 Prime Meridian Conference in Washington established Greenwich as the zero meridian (Kern 12), although the nationalistic political shading of the time issue is

demonstrated when Kern reports that by 1889 the French railways were running according to Paris time, enshrined in French law (13). It was France that was to lead the call for a unified world time, with President Raymond Poincaré pushing for the country to host the 1912 International Conference on Time, which eventually established an adequate means of transmitting time signals around the world (Kern 13). The Eiffel Tower, symbol of French nationhood and economic power on the world stage, effectively collapsed the validity of local times when it sent the first trans-global time signal at 10am on 1 July 1913 (Kern 14).

Kern goes on to observe that this preoccupation with time, and its connection to scientific and technological development, is further contributed to by Albert Einstein's Special Theory of Relativity of 1905, and General Theory of Relativity of 1916. Einstein, it is suggested, put time on the map of the public consciousness, or at least temporalised that map. However, Einstein's work also succeeded in changing the public understanding of space, albeit that a process of popularisation had to occur before his ideas filtered into the awareness of the masses, and that at his time of writing Einstein would therefore have highlighted such new ideas for a fairly limited selection of scientific scholars. As Kern points out, "Since the trajectory of light is the shortest distance between two points and the basis for all measurement, his theory [that light across a gravitational field is curved] altered the very conception of space itself" (206). Central to Einstein's work was the realisation that gravity, far from being simply the ubiquitous force familiar to scientific analysis, was in fact a "curvature of a space-time continuum" (Kern 206). Kern suggests that Einstein, along with the German physicist Hermann Minkowski, was the first person to attempt to unify time and space as a "single conceptual unit" in this way (207). Wyndham Lewis, in Time and Western Man (1927), disagrees, claiming that Henri Bergson is responsible for the hyphen between the terms "space" and "time" (Lewis 408). The yoking of these terms has got human thought nowhere, according to Lewis: "space-time is no more real, but if anything a little less real, in our view, than Space and Time separately. The wedding of these two abstractions results [. . .] in the ascendancy of Time [. . .] over Space; and of the two, if we have any preference, it is for Space" (417). Such a distinction between space and time, rather than their conceptual fusion in space-time, is vital, since "For the objective world most useful to us [. . .] and therefore with most *meaning*, and that is further to say in a word with most *reality*, we require a Space distinct from Time" (Lewis 418). The scientific debate over the truth contained in the new concept of space-time, and its relation to a curvature that is gravitational force was, then, an issue of debate among a select scientific community and its well-informed observers. Yet Lewis's critique of recent developments in scientific thought,

however inaccurate, demonstrates that strong emotional responses were brought about by attempts to rethink the categories through which humanity understands its own existence. As Lewis memorably states: “*Space* is rapidly, under the guidance of a series of Bergsons, each Time-obsessed, becoming the “Nothing” of the modern European” (418). Philosophical and political passions thus run high whenever the thinkers of the modernist period attempt to alter these fundamentals of human thought and action. To deal with space, on a practical or conceptual level is, it seems, a political act.

Several other events and trends brought time to the forefront of the modernist imagination, although often with a limited impact in the first instance. These included late nineteenth and early twentieth century studies on the social origin of time, such as Emile Durkheim’s Primitive Classification (1903) and Elementary Forms of the Religious Life (1912), and psychiatric and philosophical interest in the subjective temporalities of the mentally ill. Experiments in photography and cinematic film were also to have implications for the human perception of the passage of time, and Kern points out that the work of Eadweard Muybridge<sup>8</sup> suggested the radical notion that time could be conceived of as atomised, or at least atomisable, rather than as flux (Kern 19-29). The tension between atomisation and flow can be found in another key temporal development of the period, and one in which the connection between a reformed concept of temporality and economic productivity is made explicit: the assembly line production processes of Fordism. Initiated at the Highland Park factory, Detroit, in 1913, the assembly line inevitably caused a shift not only in the way that factory workers could be seen to contribute to productivity, but in the way that those workers themselves perceived time. Kern explains that “The assembly line and Taylorism diminished the factory worker’s active control over the immediate future in the productive process and relegated him to an expectant mode, waiting for the future to come along the line” (92). The scientific management approach of Frederick W. Taylor, developed in 1883, drew upon extensive studies in worker time and motion, establishing with the aid of a stopwatch the minimum time for the completion of an action on the production line. The maximisation of efficiency depended upon the gestural control of the worker; the most efficient bodily operations had to be established for the completion of a set task within the shortest possible time. Designed to maximise worker control and over-all system efficiency, the assembly line brought about a radical change in the temporal perceptions of the worker, in turn potentially altering his/her existential assessment of his/her situation, and his/her relation to his/her own labour, which moves toward the alienation of

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<sup>8</sup> For further discussion of the temporally atomising impact of Muybridge’s endeavours see Solnit.

which Marx had warned in the previous century.<sup>9</sup> The gestural control of Taylorist rationalisations suggests yet more fundamental changes when seen in the context of phenomenological proxemics, which claim that space is both experienced by and created through the gestures of the body. The assembly line may be seen to bring about a particular human experience of both time and space in which the control of the body results in a certain mental perception of activity. Yet it is time that is flagged as the overriding factor, with profit depending on greater efficiency extracted from a stable work force. The assembly line can in this way be seen to illustrate in microcosm the broader experience of the modernist period, in which capitalist development and a notion of progress are explicitly tied to time, and in particular to rationalised public time and efficiency, while the spatial implications of this experience are comparatively buried from sight, and therefore from critical analysis.

The modernist period both built upon and required the further development of an increasingly uniform public time, enabled by the regulation of clock time, in order to coordinate economic centralisation, urbanisation, and the various time-dependent technologies made increasing use of in the contemporary era, such as the railways, the telephone system and wireless communication. Yet the progressive flow of efficient public time was crucial not only to the facilitation of economic development, but also to the more broadly ideological ways in which the Western nations were coming to define themselves. Modernisation, the historical process of scientific, technological and economic development<sup>10</sup> can be seen, as Soja has claimed, as “a continuous process of societal restructuring that is periodically accelerated to produce a significant recomposition of space-time-being in their concrete forms, a change in the nature and experience of modernity that arises primarily from the historical and geographical dynamics of modes of production” (Soja 27). Soja here makes clear that it is the capitalist economic system that prompts and demands shifts in spatial experience, and that changing relationships between space, time and being are the survival attempts of that system after periods of comparative economic depression. The evolutionary survival of capitalism depends upon this periodic reconfiguration of space, time and being, and this reconfiguration takes the shape and name of modernisation, with its suggestion of necessary and enlightened improvement on past methods. This is what Ernest Mandel has referred to as the “long wave” periodicity of capitalist development.<sup>11</sup> Capitalist restructuring can in this way be seen as always at root a

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<sup>9</sup> See Marx, “Estranged Labour.”

<sup>10</sup> For this view of modernisation in relation to the modernist period, and as distinct from cultural development, I draw on Anderson.

<sup>11</sup> See Mandel, Long Waves in Capitalist Development: The Marxist Interpretation.

spatial matter, in terms of the geographical distribution of elements of the production/consumption system, as well as in terms of the conceptual shifts such altered distributions bring about. The modernisation and attendant shift in space that occurred in the modernist period was hidden beneath a subsequent understanding of time in the ascendant. This occlusion of spatiality was due in part to the compelling narrative of modernity and technological development, but was also perhaps due to the importance of imperialism in the epoch, which suggested the subordination of space beneath (Western, public) time.

Both modernity and empire are concerned with the notion of progression, of flow, of the importance of time and efficiency, and, ultimately, with the subordination of space. The responses of critical thought to this economy-driven spatial reconfiguration have frequently failed to afford space its rightful place at the centre of analysis, such is the compelling nature of the narrative-like unfolding of capitalist development and modernisation. As David Harvey has put it: "The reduction of space to a contingent category is implied in the notion of progress itself. Since modernity is about the experience of progress through modernization, writings on that theme have tended to emphasize temporality, the process of *becoming*, rather than *being* in space and place" (Condition 205). The annihilation of space through time is thus applicable to modernisation and to empire. The two things have a kind of formal homology, reflective of the fact that they are crucially bound up together, with the progressive modernisation notion being the justificatory narrative for colonisation, and the model of spatial subordination allowing the temporal dominance upon which the historically contingent notion of modernisation depends.

In his discussion of temporal dominance in the modernist period, Kern makes a brief reference to V.I. Lenin's text Materialism and Empirico-Criticism of 1908, in order to illustrate the political nature of attitudes to, and philosophical appreciations of, space and time. Kern notes that "Like a man trying to hold down a tent in a wind, Lenin raced about defending the objective, material world in absolute space and time that he believed to be the foundation of Marxism and which, he feared, was threatened by recent developments in mathematics and physics" (Kern 134). This wind is also constituted by developments in contemporary philosophy, and it can be seen that Lenin adheres to the materialist position (i.e. the positing of an existent objective reality in which extra-mental matter moves in time and space independently of the actions of the human mind), in contradistinction to Kantian thought (in which time and space are modes of human understanding having no prior relation to, or existence in, "reality"). A closer look at Lenin's work makes clear the problems



involved in establishing a party attitude, or here a Bolshevik attitude, to time and space in a period in which these concepts appeared to be up for grabs in a range of areas of conceptual and scientific endeavour. Further, Lenin's thinking illustrates the very real consequences, social and political, of shifts within these seemingly abstract realms of investigation.

In pegging down the tent of materialism, Lenin explicitly refers to the buffeting effect of changing conceptual thought on the issue of both space and time. "The mutability of human conceptions of space and time no more refutes the objective reality of space and time than the mutability of scientific knowledge of the structure and forms of matter in motion refutes the objective reality of the external world" (Lenin 177). Maintaining a materialist stance wards off what Lenin sees as the idealism of Kantian thought, and maintains time and space as axes of human action in a political sense. "It is impossible," he claims, "to hold consistently to a standpoint in philosophy which is inimical to all forms of fideism and idealism if we do not definitely and resolutely recognise that our developing notions of time and space *reflect* an objectively real time and space; that here, too, as in general, they are approaching objective truth" (178). This appreciation of conceptualisations as standing at one remove from lived experience, as "reflecting" it, is crucial to Lenin's attempt to maintain an arena of social action undisturbed by shifts in thought, albeit differently perceived by such shifts. "It is one thing how, with the help of various sense-organs, man perceives space, and how [ . . . ] abstract ideas of space are derived from these perceptions; it is an entirely different thing whether there is an objective reality independent of mankind which corresponds to these perceptions and conceptions of mankind" (Lenin 188). Lenin's writing was, in this instance, prompted by the threat of Machism to the Bolshevik party, and to orthodox Marxism more broadly. "We read in Mach: 'Space and time are well-ordered (*wohlgeordnete*) systems of series of sensations' [ . . . ]. This is palpable idealist nonsense, such as inevitably follows from the doctrine that bodies are complexes of sensations" (Lenin 179). The historical materialism of orthodox Marxism depended, for Lenin and his close adherents in the Bolshevik faction, on the maintenance of an objective reality, unfolding in time and space, unhampered by successive attempts to understand it conceptually, and providing the basis for historical action against the established state and its economic system. Machism, within the Bolshevik faction and beyond, was therefore a very real enemy, albeit one operating in the realms of abstract thought.

David Jarovsky relates Lenin's stance in Materialism and Empirico-Criticism to the Soviet Marxist doctrine of the "partyiness" of philosophy, which may be understood as the

ideological control of philosophy, art and scholarship by the Communist Party's Central Committee. Jarovsky states that "Usually Lenin's doctrine of partyness was merely a new name for the standard Marxist sociology of knowledge. If being determines consciousness, and the essence of social being is class conflict, then social theory cannot be disinterested, as professors hypocritically claim it to be [. . .] every social theorist serves the interest of one contending class or another" (25). With this in mind, it seems that establishing and maintaining a cohesive and coherent party line, a partyness, on philosophical issues will be problematic. Yet this is not what Lenin attempts in this particular text, although Kern suggests otherwise (Kern 135). While in general partyness involved a critical investigation of theory itself, and attempted to uncover the politically ideological affiliations of any critical endeavour, here Lenin's partyness aims to unite the Bolshevik faction through the maintenance of a philosophical neutrality.

On 25 February 1908, an editorial board meeting of The Proletarian (the official, illegal newspaper of the Bolsheviks) reaffirmed the conviction, first established in 1904, that political unity must not be sacrificed in the interest of philosophical debate. Philosophy must therefore be seen as a matter subsidiary to politics, and must have no place in the pages of the publication. Jarovsky reports that, subsequent to this meeting, "Notices were to be placed [. . .] in *The Proletarian* to the effect that philosophy was *not* a factional issue within Russian Social Democracy, since 'Machists' and dialectical materialists were to be found within both the Menshevik and Bolshevik factions" (33). The purpose of Lenin's text was not, therefore, to discipline the Bolshevik Machists, but to distance politics from philosophical speculation, with a view to keeping the faction consolidated, and perhaps also with an eye on a future bloc with the Mensheviks. Jarovsky concludes that "Partyness was one of the book's main themes, but always in the broad sense. The only possible parties in philosophy, Lenin argued, were idealism, which had been serving the interests of priests and exploiters since the Hellenic age, and materialism, which for an equally long time had been the banner of science and revolution" (37). In order to ward off the idealism of the state, materialism needed to reassert an objective world in which action could truly unfold. The historical emphasis of Marxist materialism demonstrates that, at this time, social revolution was conceived of as action taking place over time in order to bring change, in effect challenging the state on the terms of its self-imposed dominant axis of temporality.

The ongoing factional breakdown of the Bolsheviks resulted in the calling of a conference in 1909 to discuss the impingement of conceptual developments on political

thought. While Machism was not on the agenda, it became a major issue of debate once again, and the meeting ultimately concluded that the ban on the publication of philosophical speculation in The Proletarian should be upheld (Jarovsky 37). Significantly, this meeting was convened in the upstairs room of a Parisian café. Thus Lenin's ongoing efforts to sever the political and the philosophical occurred in a city that was at this point at the forefront of technology-driven change in the conceptualisation of time; a city that the contemporary journalist Houellebique referred to as "the watch of the universe" (qtd. in Kern 14). Paris is also a city, it will be argued in chapter two of this thesis, which is crucial to a retrospective analysis of shifts in the concept of space. In fact, it is conceivable that beneath this meeting of the Bolsheviks, in the café proper, avant-garde artists associated with the cubists could have been having informal meetings of their own. It is this cultural sphere of exploration that serves to highlight the partial subordination of space in favour of time in some spheres in the modernist period and its subsequent analyses, and to reveal its actual vital role in the structuring of social, economic and political life. It is a pertinent example of the contradictions contained in attempts to conceptualise space within the modernist period that while the Bolsheviks were upstairs separating reality and philosophy as a matter of policy, artists beneath were on their way to creating forms that made any such distinction questionable if not void.

Lenin's struggle with Kantian and Machist idealism is perhaps a useful place to start when thinking about the political, if not always party political, consequences of changing conceptions of space. His anxious attempt to sever experience of the objective world from changing philosophical analyses of that experience demonstrates, against his intentions, that a link exists between a conceptual shift and the nature of human, lived experience. This link is explored most comprehensively by Lefebvre, writing more than sixty years later. From a post-Lefebvrian perspective, Lenin's attempt to maintain partyiness while keeping philosophy as a distant subsidiary of politics, or at least away from the potential exacerbation of factional disputes, seems a hopeless endeavour. How is it, then, that this appreciation of the link between conceptual exploration and lived experience has come about? It seems to have occurred in connection with the shift toward a focus on space rather than time as the dominant axis in the capitalist economic system, a shift which can be said to occur in what Mandel and Jameson have described as late phase capitalism, and which is analysed most comprehensively by Lefebvre.



## Capitalism and Space

Soja's Postmodern Geographies..., published in 1989, aimed to trace the then burgeoning trend in critical geography and related disciplines which attempted a spatialisation of the analysis of social life. This turn toward the spatial had been a troubled process, due to the rigorous grip of a historical orientation in the social sciences, Marxist theoretical perspectives and economic geography over the previous decades. It is, in fact, the historical epistemology of the nineteenth century that had continued to influence the social theoretical perspectives of the twentieth, an influence that was only to weaken in the late 1960s (Soja 15-16). This epistemology, explains Soja, "still comprehends the world primarily through the dynamics arising from the emplacement of social being and becoming in the interpretive contexts of time: in what Kant called *nacheinander* and Marx defined so transfiguratively as the contingently constrained 'making of history'" (10). In the 1980s, and in significant prescient works of the preceding decade, a spatialisation of critical thought is perceived to have occurred, disrupting this false dominance of the temporal, and liberating the spatial from artificial occlusion. Yet, as Soja explains, this is not an attempt to simply invert the time – space relationship, resulting in the suppression of the temporal element: "My intent is not to erase the historical hermeneutic but to open up and recompose the territory of the historical imagination through a critical spatialization" (12). This spatialisation is essential in order to correct the pre-1970s historico-sociological view in which "An already-made geography sets the stage, while the wilful making of history dictates the action and defines the story line" (Soja 14). Space operates as an inert container or field of action in this view, with events unfolding in the historical trajectory, the flow of time. For Soja and the postmodern geographers he identifies, the behaviour of space is never that of remaining inert.

The connection of willfulness or intention and historical unfolding is significant, as it isolates time as the medium in which purposive social action and change most properly occur. By contrast, space is a given, a found element of social life which functions as a backdrop rather than a means of intervention. Implicit in this view is the suggestion that this spatial backdrop is inert and unstructured by ideological suppositions, i.e. it is not a knowingly manipulated or controlled entity. A reading of the work of Lefebvre, whose thinking in turn influenced that of Soja, renders that perception of inert, essentially "found" space invalid. In order for this spatial suppression to have persisted over the course of much

of the twentieth century, the allure of the temporal must be, as suggested above, extremely strong. Soja explains that:

It is precisely the critical and potentially emancipatory value of the historical imagination, of people 'making history' rather than taking it for granted, that has made it so compulsively appealing. The constant reaffirmation that the world can be changed by human action, by praxis, has always been the centrepiece of critical social theory whatever its particularized source and emphasis (14).

Critical social theory, and Marxist theories of political revolution, have thus clustered around the notion of time as an enabler. However, if it may be seen that space is *not* simply an inert container, facilitating action that unfolds through the passage of time, then the exclusive attribution of political or social change to the temporal realm becomes only half the picture. Although Soja never quite makes this explicit, establishing the spatial as an axis of activity of equivalent importance to the temporal creates a seriously damaging dent in the traditional Marxist, or historically orientated, social theoretical stance's claim that revolution can be achieved only through a temporal orientation. For Soja, then, temporocentrism constitutes "an overdeveloped historical contextualization of social life and social theory that actively submerges and peripheralizes the geographical or spatial imagination" (15). While he does not seek to contest the potential of historiography as a means of insight, Soja does charge this mode of thought with "the creation of a critical silence, an implicit subordination of space to time that obscures geographical interpretations of the changeability of the social world" (15).

Neil Smith has suggested that a reading of Marx that conceives of his thought as uninterested in, or neglectful of, a spatial perspective upon the capitalist system, is erroneous. For Smith, Marx in fact sees spatial properties as integral to the crucial calculation of use-value: "The integration of an erstwhile isolated place of production into a national or international economy [ . . . ] does not alter its absolute location, but in the process of altering its relative location, this act of spatial integration also enhances the realization of abstract labour as value" (N. Smith 82). While he claims that "neither Marx nor subsequent Marxist theorists have succeeded in establishing a proper conceptual foundation for treating geographical space," Smith maintains that "It is a common misconception that Marx's analysis of capitalism is non-spatial" (81). Soja states that early twentieth century modernisers of Marxist thought including Lenin, Luxemburg, Bukharin and Bauer did have a certain geographical sensitivity, and yet their approach remained largely historical: "History was the emotive variable container; geography, as Marx put it earlier, was little more than an 'unnecessary complication'. Like capitalism itself, the modern critique of capitalism seemed

to be propelled through an annihilation of space by time” (32-33). There is, then, a complicity between the axis that appears to be in the ascendant at this point in capitalist economic development, and the orientation of the theoretical work that ultimately seeks to bring about its downfall. Capitalism is fought on its own terms. If, then, the ascendancy of the temporal axis obscures a true spatial orientation even at a comparatively early phase of the capitalist system’s development, i.e. even in the early twentieth century, then temporocentric theoretical attempts to question and qualify the nature of the modernist economic system can be seen to be barking up the wrong theoretical tree. If Soja’s analysis is correct, then the modernist period is one of those in which space is annihilated through a focus on time in social theoretical thought. This begins to sound like the approach of the ideology and practice of imperialism within that period, which the Marxist interpretation perceives as “the rise of imperialism via the internationalization of finance capital” (Soja 33). Aside from the early twentieth century modernisers of Western Marxism, Soja identifies the critical social sciences as the other major strand of thought within contemporary social theory. These social scientists are also subject to a time-focused analysis of the developing economy, which is seen as “the time-lagged diffusion of development (as capitalist modernity) to the undeveloped, traditional, not yet fully modernized parts of the world” (Soja 33). While this expansion of the civilising powers of economic development necessarily encompasses a geographical awareness in that it moves from the West to less developed areas of the globe, Soja argues that “the geography of modernity remained essentially an adjunct, a reflective mirror of societal modernization” (33). Actual human geography, and the spatial voracity of capitalist economics is, then, subordinated in a period when both the economic system itself and its analysts, mythologisers, philosophers and critics are focused, instead, on the historical unfolding of action taking place in time.

It cannot reasonably be suggested that it is merely the allure of temporality that keeps critical analysis of the economic system turned in its favour, to the neglect of space; the spatialisation of any critique of capitalism must be perceived, by those favouring time, as flawed by contrast. This appears to be the case for both major strands of social thought identified by Soja: Western Marxism and the social sciences. “Those seeking the demise of capitalism,” he explains, “tended to see in spatial consciousness and identity [. . .] a dangerous fetter on the rise of a united world proletariat, a false consciousness inherently antagonistic to the revolutionary subjectivity and objective historical project of the working

class" (35).<sup>12</sup> As for those in the social sciences seeking societal reform to tackle the problems of the consolidating capitalist economy, they were also "uncomfortable with localisms and regionalisms which might too impatiently threaten the expectantly benevolent power of the capitalist state" (Soja 35). Of course, a sense of territorial nationalism, an explicit tie between geographical space and a nationalist or regionalist ideology, would threaten the structure of imperialism, and stem the tide of finance washing into the West. The spatial nature of the imperialist project thus makes itself known at the point when it comes under potential threat. This orientation towards the temporal, then, has major ramifications for the ongoing mystification of the true spatial nature of capitalism, and the social life of which it was, in the early twentieth century, increasingly in command. Soja notes that:

Blocked from seeing the production of space as a social process rooted in the same problematic as the making of history, critical social theory tended to project human geography on to the physical background of society, thus allowing its powerful structuring effect to be thrown away with the dirty bathwater of a rejected environmental determinism (35).

He sees this hidden spatiality as a crucial product of the evolutionary permutations of the capitalist system. "At every scale of life," he claims, "the spatial organization of society was being restructured to meet the urgent demands of capitalism in crisis – to open up new opportunities for super-profits, to find new ways to maintain social control, to stimulate increased production and consumption" (34).

This hidden "spatial fix" (Soja 34) at the heart of modernist society, and its partial subordination beneath a view of the capitalist economic system as primarily temporal in orientation is uncovered by Lefebvre. The publication of his The Production of Space in 1974 did much to re-establish space as a "social process," to borrow Soja's term, albeit that a further seventeen years were to elapse before the text was available in English translation. Soja acknowledges a great debt to Lefebvre, identifying him as one of "the most insightful early cartographers" of postmodern space, an accolade which he shares with Foucault, John Berger and Mandel (61). Lefebvre, Foucault and Berger, we are told, "clearly rotate their arguments around the realization that it is now space more than time that hides things from us, that the demystification of spatiality and its veiled instrumentality of power is the key to making practical, political, and theoretical sense of the contemporary era" (Soja 61). This capacity of space in the postmodern period to mask the reality of economic relations and

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<sup>12</sup> There is an echo here of Georg Lukács's suggestion that spatiality constitutes the establishment of a false consciousness in the worker which keeps him from being able to enact a resistant historical intervention. See Lukács.

their spatially mediated impact on social life can only be challenged by an appreciation of space, not only as a social process (as bound up with social action), but a social product (resulting from that action). Lefebvre, in attempting to describe the peculiar interrelationship between a nascent late phase capitalism and the social space that is at once its offspring and its facilitator, explicitly makes the claim that “(*Social*) space is a (*social*) product” (26). In a related move, Jameson is able to suggest that “Lefebvre’s emphasis on space did more than correct a (modernist) imbalance; it also acknowledged the increasing share, in our life experience fully as much as in late capitalism itself, of the urban and the new globality of the system” (*Postmodernism* 364). Tying Lefebvre’s spatial uncovering to the specific geography of flexible systems of accumulation,<sup>13</sup> and to the urban centres in which economic development may be said to have its most conspicuous impact, Jameson’s comment makes clear that not only must the social production of space be appreciated, but the root of that social creation must be acknowledged to be the system of production and consumption that is the global force of capitalism. While Lefebvre’s analysis of space applies most substantially to the age of global capitalism, to the postmodern period, it is also pertinent to the modernist period, when the connection between space and economics is in an early phase of consolidation.

In an article entitled “Reflections on the Politics of Space,” published in *Antipode* two years after the publication of *The Production of Space*, Lefebvre makes clear the ideological content of any spatial system, no matter the tendency of critical thought to view space as an arena of action rather than a social product:

Space is not a scientific object removed from ideology and politics [. . .]. If space has an air of neutrality and indifference with regard to its contents and thus seems to be ‘purely’ formal [. . .] it is precisely because it has been occupied and used, and has already been the focus of past processes whose traces are not always evident on the landscape. [. . .] Space is political and ideological. It is a product literally filled with ideologies (qtd. in Soja 80).

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<sup>13</sup> The spatial picture in the era of flexible accumulation is outlined by Harvey: “Superior command over space becomes an even more important weapon in class struggle. It becomes one of the means to enforce speed-up and the redefinition of skills on recalcitrant workforces. Geographical mobility and decentralization are used against a union power which traditionally concentrated in the factories of mass production. Capital flight, deindustrialization of some regions, and the industrialization of others, the destruction of traditional working-class communities as power bases in class struggle, become leitmotifs of spatial transformation under more flexible conditions of accumulation” (*Condition* 294).



The conceptualisation of space as a social product allows, then, an appreciation of the fact that space is at once ideological, filled with abstract notions including demands, prohibitions and political implications, yet also practical, in terms of ordering actual social behaviour. Lefebvre's own project reflects this mental/physical duality of space itself, in that he seeks to construct a more accurate conceptual appreciation of contemporary space, yet also to understand the impact of such a construction on human practice. The social/physical realm *must* be considered, and not subordinated to the exploration of the mental or logical means of understanding and explicating space. Lefebvre accuses a variety of thinkers, including Julia Kristeva, Jacques Derrida and Roland Barthes, of "forever promoting the basic sophistry whereby the philosophico-epistemological notion of space is fetishized and the mental realm comes to envelop the social and physical ones" (5). The suggestion is that this mental space is "apparently, but only apparently, extra-ideological" (Lefebvre 6). A focus on the mental at the expense of the physical will, then, lead to an appreciation of space as being primarily a conceptual notion without the capacity to order physical action or social experience, an appreciation that leads us back in the dangerous direction of the concept of space as inert container.

In a matter of related importance, the new spatial theory that Lefebvre aims to sketch must not be attached to any existing space-involved specialism such as architecture, urbanism, planning or economics, as this would perpetuate a schism of spheres, and further exacerbate the mental/physical disjunction. Instead, a kind of linguistic philosophical universal must be found; one which does not attach itself to any particular realm of thought. Lefebvre's universal is that of the production of space. He claims that "the concepts of *production* and of [ . . . ] *producing* do have a certain abstract universality" (15); he aims to recover these concepts from the economic specialisation and "put them back to work" (15). This will be an imaginative or philosophical leap, given our intuitive tendency to view space as a pre-existent container or enabling field of action. As Lefebvre explains, "To speak of 'producing space' sounds bizarre, so great is the sway still held by the idea that empty space is prior to whatever ends up filling it" (15). The linguistic or theoretical universal of the production of space will operate, for Lefebvre, as the bridge between the mental realm of re-conceptualisations, and the physical realm of social practice. "What is called for, therefore, is a thoroughgoing exposition of these concepts, and of their relations, on the one hand with the extreme formal abstraction of logico-mathematical space, and on the other hand with the practico-sensory realm of social space" (15). In this way, two key ideas can be drawn from Lefebvre's initial statement that social space is a social product: the notion of production as the most promising means of reformulating the way that space is thought about, and the

notion of space as, at root, a social matter. Yet the space of the postmodern/late capitalist evolutionary phase in the history of economic systems conceals this very status as a socially produced and economically rooted manifestation. It does so through the peculiar operations of what Lefebvre conceives of as capitalist abstract space.

The status of Lefebvorean social space in theoretical analysis is difficult to ascertain, as it can be problematic to establish the precise relationship between space and the analytical or scientific parameters that seek to understand it. This methodological conundrum appears to be Lefebvre's subject when he states that "What we are concerned with, then, is the long *history of space*, even though space is neither a 'subject' nor an 'object' but rather a social reality – that is to say, a set of relations and forms" (116). This project involves, essentially, the history of a social reality, meaning that while it is frequently entangled in philosophical and theoretical investigations, it attempts to tie these in as consistent a manner as possible to cultural and social practice. To remain exclusively in the theoretical or mental realm is to add merely one more obfuscation to the understanding of the nature of space. The imposition of a mental abstraction at the level of practice is the very slippery operation that late capitalism attempts in superimposing an abstract space upon social reality. It is worth considering just what is intended by the reference to a "long *history of space*" in the foregoing quotation. Perhaps Lefebvre merely seeks to draw attention to the trans-epochal focus of his study, which encompasses the spatial logic of Greek temples, the power structures inherent to Renaissance perspectivism and the restrictions and opportunities afforded by contemporary cityscapes. The phrase could, however, be seen to denote a *long* history of the production of space under capitalism, in a parallel phraseology to that functioning in references to the "long" eighteenth century. In the latter case, those features that marked the century as a whole, in terms of monarchical and political structure and social life, can be discerned in a nascent state at a time exceeding the temporal bounds of the century proper. In a similar way, the production of space under capitalism can be traced back beyond the late phase with which it is most commonly associated, to reveal that spatial ordering also belongs to capitalism in the early twentieth century. This can be seen as the long history of (capitalist) space.

It is also possible to suggest that Lefebvre is writing the deep history of the concept of space and its connection with capital in the Heideggerian sense of *seinsgeschichte*, in which we continue to live in the opening of an ontological shift that occurred some time in the past (Clark 28). Heidegger's preoccupation with the unthought elements of any epoch is relevant

here, since what is being dealt with is essentially the unthought, seeming obviousness of abstract space, a space which is, for better or worse, the facilitator of contemporary being. The unthoughtness of spatial abstraction is a feature of its functionality. In fact, as Lefebvre points out, "This [abstract] space is a lethal one which destroys the historical conditions that gave rise to it, its own (internal) differences, and any such differences that show signs of developing, in order to impose an abstract homogeneity" (370). In this way abstract space has obscured its own roots, or historical origins, by destroying or concealing the conditions that brought it about. Certainly we are dealing with a history deeply buried by the state, a form of space that has erased its traces in the interests of establishing itself as *unthought because unconstructed*. The project of the shift toward an understanding of the production of space thus becomes a kind of detective project; one which Lefebvre tentatively begins.

Lefebvre notes that "The spatial practice of a society secretes that society's space; it propounds and presupposes it, in a dialectical interaction; it produces it [. . .] as it masters and appropriates it. From the analytic standpoint, the spatial practice of a society is revealed through the deciphering of its space" (38). For Lefebvre, the space secreted by late phase capitalism, the space with which this economic system undertakes a dialectical interaction, the space to be deciphered by his progressive and hugely influential study, is abstract space. Suggesting that each successive mode of capitalist development entails the production of a new *form* of space, albeit one that may be only retrospectively identified as such, Lefebvre suggests that it is spatial abstraction that characterises the space-experience of late phase capitalism (46). He claims that "Capitalism and neocapitalism have produced abstract space, which includes the 'world of commodities', its 'logic' and its worldwide strategies, as well as the power of money and that of the political state" (53). It is in the realm of the urban that Lefebvre sees abstract space as coming into contact with, and seeking to control, human minds and bodies. Far from being restricted to urban centres, late phase capitalism's spatial appetite causes shifts on a global level, with increased profit realised through the flexible redistribution of centres of production and consumption. Yet the city is the place where much of Lefebvre's analysis takes place, although this is not consistently acknowledged. On this micro level, the state's attempted domination of abstract space becomes available for analysis, in a way that is not always possible on the macro level of trans-continental shifts.

Contemporary city space may thus be seen as a key example of how social space works in the contemporary world in which it is abstracted; an abstraction made use of, and compounded, by the capitalist system. The status of the city as the geographical space in



which the economic, production-based root of spatial reconfigurations is made most explicit is a core message between the lines of The Production of Space. This urban space, taken as indicative of social space as a whole, seems to be an extrapolation of the reification of the Taylorised work system, in which workers repeat the same gesture, a gesture which has been carefully quantified and calculated as a part of the wider system of production. In this way the means of the production of things in late capitalism may be seen to have generated a template for the spatial logic of entire cities, since abstract space is repetitive, and subsumes all space into its over-arching system of homogeneity. Urban spaces, subject to repetitious homogeneity, also possess an “increasingly pronounced visual character. They are made with the visible in mind: the visibility of people and things, of spaces and of whatever is contained by them. The predominance of visualization [. . .] serves to conceal repetitiveness” (Lefebvre 75). The visual or spectacular character of postmodern urban culture has been well documented.<sup>14</sup> This repetition of space, through which abstraction suggests differentiation whilst actually concealing sameness, an endless homogeneity, is crucial to spatial abstraction in this period. Far from enabling free human action, capitalism lays hold of the Earth’s space and produces its own “through and by means of urbanization, under the pressure of the world market; and, in accordance with the law of the reproducible and the repetitive, by abolishing spatial and temporal differences, by destroying nature and nature’s time” (Lefebvre 326). For Lefebvre, time *and* space must both be subjected to scrutiny, and to bury either from view is to obscure the operations of the capitalist system.

Lefebvre’s analysis reveals that abstract space masks its root in social and economic production through a crucial double illusion in which two apparently opposed aspects of the space of postmodernity come to be mutually reinforcing: the illusion of transparency, and the illusion of opacity, or what Lefebvre refers to as the “realistic” illusion (27). Within the illusion of transparency “space appears as luminous, as intelligible, as giving action free rein [it] goes hand in hand with a view of space as innocent, as free of traps or secret places” (Lefebvre 27-8). Within the realistic illusion, space appears to make elucidation unnecessary, through the presentation of an obvious and uncomplex opacity. This socially produced spatiality of the capitalist state is not merely a clandestine or under-hand creation; in fact it can operate only through what is seen. Capitalist social space is *visible*, and it is this visual manifestation that suggests its normative status, through the double illusion of “seeming limpidity” (Lefebvre 190) and total opacity. Thus, while to the Lefebvre-trained eye the capitalist system’s visual economy leaves traces and scars throughout the terrain of quotidian

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<sup>14</sup> See, for example, Debord.

experience, in buildings, monuments, works of art, the human subject of the system views their spatial practice as individual and elected. It is the clarification of this actual spatial control that prompts Lefebvre to ask that we shift our understanding of capitalist processes of production “from *things in space* to the actual *production of space*” (Lefebvre 37).

Lefebvre goes so far as to claim that abstract space “is not in fact defined on the basis of what is perceived. Its abstraction has nothing simple about it: it is not transparent and cannot be reduced either to a logic or to a strategy. [ . . . ] It has nothing of a ‘subject’ about it, yet it acts like a subject in that it transports and maintains specific social relations, dissolves others and stands opposed to yet others” (50). Human perception of (urban) space is in this way shown to be misleading, since “What we seem to have, then, is [ . . . ] the abstract ‘one’ of modern social space, and – hidden within it, concealed by its illusory transparency – the real ‘subject’, namely state (political) power” (Lefebvre 51). It is this fact that leads Lefebvre to claim that abstract space is “the locus and medium of the generation (or production) of false consciousness” (310). Abstract space contains much but denies all: hierarchies, arranged places, roles, and values bound to specific places. It therefore guides quotidian behaviour on the part of the city dweller: “A space of this kind presupposes the existence of a ‘spatial economy’ [ . . . ]. This economy valorizes certain relationships between people in particular places (shops, cafés, cinemas, etc.), and thus gives rise to connotative discourses concerning these places; these in turn generate ‘consensuses’ or conventions” (Lefebvre 56). Lefebvre goes on to explain that “Such ‘representations’ find their authority and prescriptive power in and through the space that underpins them and makes them effective” (311). Significantly, this is a space of control: “The meanings conveyed by abstract space are more often prohibitions than solicitations or stimuli (except when it comes to consumption)” (Lefebvre 319). The complicity of the human subject in the use of abstract space is hidden, due to its clandestine operations: “Abstract space works in a highly complex way. It has something of a dialogue about it, in that it implies a tacit agreement, a non-aggression pact, a contract, as it were, of non-violence. It imposes reciprocity, and a commonality of use” (Lefebvre 56).

The subject’s spatial experience/experiential space is, in the foregoing analyses, described in such a way that it begins to sound like the container theory against which Lefebvre has set out his theoretical stall, since the space of abstraction seems to pre-exist, and pre-scribe the behaviour of, that subject. However, we are dealing with the concrete spaces of the city here, and therefore the manifestations of the capitalist economy. Thus this

space only pretends emptiness, it is not in fact an empty container, nor is any such thing possible. "Every space is already in place before the appearance in it of actors [. . .]. This pre-existence of space conditions the subject's presence, action and discourse, his competence and performance; yet the subject's presence, action and discourse, at the same time as they presuppose this space, also negate it" (Lefebvre 57). The feeling of coming up against this abstract space is equivalent to meeting a concrete block to the path of your elected action: "The subject experiences space as an obstacle, as a resistant 'objectivity' at times as implacably hard as a concrete wall, being not only extremely difficult to modify in any way but also hedged about by Draconian rules prohibiting any attempt at such modification" (Lefebvre 57). Lefebvre paints a bleak picture, in which resistance to this space seems futile:

Abstract space, the space of the bourgeoisie and of capitalism, bound up as it is with exchange [. . .] depends on consensus more than any space before it. [. . .] within this space violence does not always remain latent or hidden. One of its contradictions is that between the appearance of security and the constant threat, and indeed the occasional eruption, of violence (57).

In this way abstract space can be said to repress and terrorise, "even though it may be strewn with ostensible signs of the contrary (of contentment, amusement or delight)" (Lefebvre 144). The apparent transparency of abstract space, its legibility, is itself false, in that "spaces made (produced) to be read are the most deceptive and tricked-up imaginable. The graphic impression of readability is a sort of *trompe-l'oeil* concealing strategic intentions and actions" (Lefebvre 143).

Lefebvre thus concludes that, despite its apparent legibility and transparency, "Fetishized abstract space thus gives rise to two practical abstractions: 'users' who cannot recognize themselves within it, and a thought which cannot conceive of adopting a critical stance towards it" (93). In order to tackle this fetishised abstract space, he poses a key philosophical question: what is space?:

Now let us consider for a moment any given space, any 'interval' provided that it is not empty. Such a space contains things yet is not itself a thing or material 'object'. Is it then a floating 'medium', a simple abstraction, or a 'pure' form? No – precisely because it has a content. [. . .] any space implies, contains and dissimulates social relationships – and this despite the fact that a space is not a thing but rather a set of relations between things (objects and products) (82-3).

Lefebvre suggests that it is the social character of space, which could perhaps be termed its relational nature, that has come to visibly dominate, in the visually dominated world of contemporary capitalism (83). In contrast to the conceptualisation of space as container,

Lefebvre states that space “is at once a precondition and a result of social superstructures. [. . .] there is no sense in which space can be treated solely as an *a priori* condition of these institutions and the state which presides over them” (85). Thus space is a social relationship, and one both formed by and formative of the relations of production in the economic system of capitalism, “one which is inherent to property relationships [. . .] and also closely bound up with the forces of production [. . .]. Though a *product* to be used, to be consumed, it is also a *means of production*; networks of exchange and flows of raw materials and energy fashion space and are determined by it” (Lefebvre 85). In Lefebvre’s late capitalism, then, the production of space has taken precedence over the production of things in space. Lefebvre’s project in The Production of Space is extremely wide-ranging, and no overview of his theoretical manoeuvres can do him justice. However, several crucial observations emerge that are valuable for a spatial reading of the modernist period. First, space must be reinstated alongside time as a vital determinant of human behaviour. It must be viewed as a social product and, further, as a more significant result of the economic system than that system’s ostensible products in the form of consumer goods. Second, an appreciation of this connection between space and economics provides clarification of the role of capitalism in social life, and opens up the possibility of a fully informed critique of the system. Finally, opening the capitalist system to analysis is vital in the postmodern age, yet is a project that could usefully have been begun in the foregoing modernist epoch. While changing attitudes to space are one way of distinguishing modernism from postmodernism (as Jameson mentions above), the two epochs share a common conjunction between their economic systems and the control or, rather, the production of space.

The application of these observations to the earlier phase of capitalist development is confirmed as apposite when Lefebvre, in a swerve toward the temporal, refers to an “epoch-making event” (25) responsible for changing the way human beings conceptualise their relationship to space, and his epochal marker is 1910, carrying its echoes of Virginia Woolf’s analysis of the significance of the date. Rather than ushering in a phase of fundamental change in human character, however, Lefebvre’s 1910 instead sets in train a radically new human spatiality:

The fact is that around 1910 a certain space was shattered. It was the space of common sense, of knowledge (*savoir*), of social practice, of political power, a space hitherto enshrined in everyday discourse, just as in abstract thought [. . .] the space, too, of classical perspective and geometry [. . .]. Such were the shocks and onslaughts suffered by this space that today it retains but a feeble pedagogical reality [. . .]. Euclidean and perspectivist space have disappeared as systems of reference (25).

The selection of 1910 as the year in which this spatial shattering occurs is never fully explained, although Lefebvre's use of the word "event" suggests that he is intentionally drawing attention to a punctate point in time, an instance of historical conjuncture, rather than some kind of more loosely modernist conceptual clustering. Lefebvre goes on to describe abstract space in great detail, and clearly sees 1910 as a significant date in the pre-history of this spatial development. What, then, are the implications of this retrospective determination of an early originary point for a space that Lefebvre views as reaching its apogee in the postmodern period? It is possible to argue that members of the cultural avant-garde of this modernist period were the first to perceive that a space of abstraction was resulting from the evolutionary shift toward a new form of capitalism. Responding to alterations in the concept of space which would ultimately be part of the armoury of spatial ordering made use of in late phase capitalism, avant-garde painters, thinkers and writers foregrounded spatial change in their work. At this stage spatial concepts were relatively free-floating, still only partially explored and explained, and it was therefore possible to identify and illuminate them just before their subsumption into the ideological machinery of the economic system. Spatial shattering, according to Lefebvre, occurred in 1910, and before capitalist abstract space became both normative and transparent, strategically clandestine. In the following chapters, modernist output will be viewed as a flowering of cultural work that made visible the change between phases of capitalism, and the resultant shift toward a certain abstracted space secreted by that economic system.

### **Space and Modernist Cultural Production**

Lefebvre remarks upon the transition of the spatial question from the realm of the philosophers, to that of the mathematicians, and back to the philosophers. This latter shift occurs when mathematics fails to suggest how its own logic-based assumptions and theories about space might relate to social life (Lefebvre 2-3). Lefebvre condemns his contemporary field of epistemology for an imprecise and overly liberal use of the term "space," which he believes betrays a lack of terminological rigour. As a result, space escapes any truly meaningful discussion, let alone one that might clarify the link between spatial concepts and social praxis. He notes that not only "man" but "space" is missing from epistemological studies that purport to deal with the fundamentals of existence (3). The term "space" peppers theoretical discourse, but the taxonomy as it exists within this discipline can neither explicate nor adequately contain the notion. A physical or social relationship with space, or the full exploration of the relationship currently existing, founders on this problem of terminology.



Thinkers throughout the twentieth century have, like the Oxford English Dictionary, failed to adequately pin down the meaning of space as term and concept. Further, and again in parallel to the trials of the Dictionary's own attempt, theoretical discourse has found the lure of time to be the source of its conceptual troubles. It seems that space cannot be disentangled from temporal, social, ideological and bodily considerations. Nor is it easy to go against the grain of intuitive understandings of space that have their roots in historically-oriented conceptualisations which posit space as an inert container or arena of unfolding. It is precisely this operation of space as a conceptual intersection between these other crucial elements of the understanding of human existence that makes space at once an immense conceptual challenge, and a vital area of academic exploration.

Lefebvre's attempt to formulate a unitary theory through the universalising capacities of the notion of the production of space seeks to prevent the slippage of theoretical ideas from one field into another, and to foreclose the possibility of any taxonomic sleight-of-hand. In the abstract space of late capitalism, just such a transposition between fields can be seen to occur, meaning that decisions taken beyond the social sphere can be made to stand for that sphere. Thus, under capitalism, we have an artificial separation in place between mental space and the space of praxis, *and* a dangerous intermingling of the two. Lefebvre remarks on "the distance that separates 'ideal' space, which has to do with mental (logico-mathematical) categories, from 'real' space, which is the space of social practice. In actuality, each of these two kinds of space involves, underpins and presupposes the other" (14). Changing concepts of space thus result in changes in social/cultural praxis. Once this is known, then any act of rethinking space will not only bring to clarity and interrogate the space put in place by the economic system, but will open up the possibility of social practice that resists such a system. Thus, for Lefebvre, any move toward a lived counter-argument to capitalism begins with the conceptual exploration of space.

Marc Augé, echoing Lefebvre and Massey in his concern for adequate and accurate terminological practice, claims that "The craze for the word 'space', applied indiscriminately [. . .] expresses not only the themes that haunt the contemporary era (advertising, image, leisure, freedom, travel) but also the abstraction that corrodes and threatens them, as if the consumers of contemporary space were invited first and foremost to treat themselves to words" (83). Again, the danger of dealing *exclusively* with the terminological or theoretical realm, which Augé configures as the realm of abstraction, is highlighted. He also begins to sketch a history of fascination with space, which, while perhaps becoming most conspicuous with the postmodern geographers described by Soja as "determined space invaders" (68), can

in fact be identified considerably earlier in the twentieth century. Alongside this fascination, the spatial turn prompts a kind of theoretical terror, perhaps stemming from the lengthy history of the appreciation of temporality as the medium of social change. In tracing the story of space in the early twentieth century, a framework and taxonomy which delineates registers or types of space is essential.

This thesis deals with the concrete spaces of the modernist period, where the term “concrete” denotes space which is physically appreciable by the senses, and open to mutual perception between human beings. A crucial concrete space encountered in this study is that of the modernist city. In addition, metaphoric space is addressed, which takes place in the conceptual or theoretical realm, and is not open to mutual sensory experience. Concrete and metaphoric spaces interact, such that concrete space prompts or may be understood through metaphoric space, just as metaphoric space may affect behaviour within, or experience of, concrete space. The interaction of concrete and metaphoric space may be thought of as social space, which may then be expressed and explored in the cultural output of modernism. One expression of social space is therefore the modernist literary text. Such texts contain references to concrete space in documenting the changing form and pace of the contemporary urban environment, and also to the metaphoric spaces that such milieux give rise to. Further, they document the interaction between concrete and metaphoric space in social experience. Literary texts operate as maps to spatial territory in the broadest terms. In the modernist period, new realms of space are opening up on the concrete/physical level and on the metaphoric/conceptual level, meaning that modernist literature has a newly broadened realm to explore. Transformations in the concrete spaces of modernity will not only have an impact on the metaphoric spaces of the period, but on the literary texts that at once enact and bear witness to modernist spatial transformation. The literary text itself may be considered a “space,” which has both concrete and metaphoric aspects. Concretely, the modernist text undergoes changes of lay-out and typography. Metaphorically, the space of the text becomes sufficiently affective to allow the reader to imaginatively inhabit it. Joseph Frank’s “Spatial Form in Modern Literature” (1945) identifies a trend that sees both the concrete and metaphoric levels of space transformed in modernist literary texts, although the nature of this transformation remains vague in his essay. This thesis will trace more fully this spatial story.

Chapter two uses cubist art as a means of introducing and exploring the change that comes about in modernist art forms once space is liberated from its status as a geometrical concept, the preserve of the mathematical sciences, and becomes a concrete entity and a metaphorical concept available for interrogation in the medium of modernist cultural

production. Chapter three begins the story of modernist literature's changing relationship to space. The contemporary newspaper is seen to have an impact on the concrete shape of the literary text (through new technologically facilitated developments in typography, illustration and design) and on the metaphorical space of such texts. The varying levels of impact of the newspaper form are considered in three significant modernist works. Chapter four finds advertisement at the root of changes to newspaper lay-out, and asks how ads themselves might be seen to alter the content and form of the literary text. The connection between ads, newspapers and the concrete space of the modernist city, and the representation of that relationship in the pages of the literary text, is of course of crucial importance to this and the preceding chapter. Finally, chapter five begins with Frank's famous claims, and asks just what "spatial form" might mean over and above ostensible alterations in the concrete space of the modernist text. The chapter looks at the art historical concept of the "haptic" and suggests that modernist texts, through changes to their own space on a concrete and metaphoric level, generate a radical new spatial experience of literary text, which in turn brings the wider spatial transformations of the period sharply into focus.

Throughout the thesis, spatial transformation in the modernist period, be it concrete or metaphoric, taking place within a literary text or beyond, is seen to be driven, at root, by economic modernisation. Excising time from a consideration of any period of human chronological history results in an inaccurate analysis of social life. However, by shifting the focus of modernist study from the capitalism – time connection, the partially submerged history of the capitalism – space relationship within this period can be revealed. It is not appropriate to suggest that postmodern perspectives offer a corrective view of the modernist period that identifies a spatio-economic connection unobserved by writers and thinkers at that time. In fact, a spatially focused reappraisal of modernist cultural production demonstrates that the connection between space and economics was perceived, explored and interrogated in a way that may now be revealed to be prescient in terms of subsequent economic development and its impact on social life. Within the triangulation of economic, spatial and literary forces, the literary portrays ongoing radical change in the interactions between the other two terms, and in doing so leaves a legacy of peculiarly spatially attuned novels that demonstrate that the modernist period is, amongst many other things, a period of accelerated spatial change.

This thesis, an attempt to trace the long history of capitalist space, will focus on the systems of representation, cultural forms, and scientific and philosophical thinking of the modernist period, in order to show that it was in these realms that the modernist spatial turn,



the turn toward the illumination of the inherently spatial nature of capitalism, occurred. In this way, artists and writers of the modernist avant-garde will be shown to be the forebears of the space invading postmodern geographers of the late 1960s onwards. It is in the cultural realm that the barometer of spatio-temporal balance within the capitalist system of modernity is resituated. Marxist spatial analysis of the 1970s, under the influence of Lefebvre and others, considered "the possibility of a complex socio-spatial dialectic operating within the structure of the economic base, in contrast with the prevailing materialist formulation which regards the organization of spatial relations only as a cultural expression confined to the superstructural realm" (Soja 81). Space must not, therefore, be considered to be purely a cultural matter. In fact, the cultural output of the modernist period is, it will be argued, expressing shifts in the operations of the economic base, shifts stemming from and reliant upon spatial reconfigurations in that base, and reflecting these in the superstructural realm of the cultural. Spatial exploration is not considered by these modernist artists and writers to be something confined to the cultural sphere in a way that can have no bearing on social practice. Indeed, many such avant-garde modernists come, in this period, to question just what such a cultural sphere would in any case involve. Lefebvre suggests that old spatial codes live on due to their conjunction with our intuitive sense of the world, a sense persistent enough to guide the construction of the OED. Therefore the purpose of academic explorations of space should be, just as certain modernist cultural practices were, to excavate the actual construction of these codes from beneath what appears, even at the expense of a disorientating rethink as to the true nature of space, and therefore human ontology, in any given period.

## Chapter Two

### Cubist Works

#### The Concept of Space: Cubism and Conjuncture

Virginia Woolf was not alone in identifying 1910 as a point of departure for new ways of thinking about the nature of the self and the experience of modernity. When she notes that “in or about December, 1910, human character changed” (“Mr. Bennett” 91), and that “All human relations have shifted” (92), she makes clear her intention to address not only the possibility of literary expression in the early twentieth century, but the changing character of the reality that such endeavours must seek to grasp. In order to bring Mrs. Brown, or “life itself,” (111) to consciousness, Woolf warns that “we must reconcile ourselves to a season of failures and fragments” (110). This fragmentary mode is the fate of literary representation at this time, as writing strives towards an expression of reality that is not obscured or reduced to an apparition by the restrictive literary conventions of past ages. Woolf justifies, and invokes patience towards, the startling fragmentation of the literary form, as it attempts to improve its expression of the “overwhelming fascination” (111) of contemporary existence.

Elsewhere in Europe, 1910 appears similarly to operate as a historical marker denoting a break from both previous conventions and previous experiences. Reviewing the Paris *Salon d’Automne* exhibition of 1910, which featured followers of the then nascent cubist movement, the poet and critic Roger Allard makes the first explicit reference linking cubist art to the thinking of the philosopher Henri Bergson, a connection which has been debated in much subsequent art historical analysis. Considering two works by Jean Metzinger, he states that his “nude and his landscape are governed by one and the same striving for fragmentary synthesis” (Allard 62), this synthesis being an element of Bergson’s thinking on the experience of time as mediated by the senses. Allard, like Woolf, notes the fragmentary state of contemporary cultural expression. Perhaps more significantly, he yokes together the fields of philosophy and art, suggesting in line with Woolf that art has been prompted to reconsider its formal practices in recognition of epistemological changes in modernity’s conceptualisations of selfhood and the experience of nature. The thought of Bergson was at this time being appropriated, via a popularised *Bergsonisme*, by various crosscurrents within French politics, as well as within the artistic avant-garde. In fact, Allard’s critical output over the following year was increasingly to justify the innovations of salon cubism by ascribing it to a nationalist political ideology that saw Bergsonism and classicism intimately associated.

To engage with the form of art at this time was thus, as Allard's comments indicate, to engage with issues of philosophical modernity that were themselves being interrogated and reconfigured by various political currents. Cubism, whilst an art form that many have seen as hermetic and self-referential, was engaging with Woolf's "life itself" – an engagement over which the artists involved did not always have control.

This apparent contraction of the spheres of social life, drawing artistic production into a nexus in which many other areas of thought were combined, was noted by another thinker, again writing in 1910. Charles Maurras, leading ideologue of the reactionary *Action Française*, was to state in this year that in his early political development he "had seen the ruins in the realm of thought and taste before noticing the social, military and economic damage that generally results from democracy" (qtd. in Cottington 58). The contiguity of the cultural and philosophical spheres is again implied, presumably the referents of "thought and taste." In addition, Maurras suggests that thought and taste can operate as a kind of historical indicator that will reveal the ills of a given structure of society, and more particularly of its economic and political shape. In fact, he goes on to suggest that "by analysing the literary errors of romanticism we were led, indeed dragged, to study the moral and political errors of a state involved in revolution" (qtd. in Cottington 58). Again, "life itself" and artistic representation are seen to be intimately bound up with one another. However, to consider the literary and artistic output of any phase of history as functioning exclusively as a gauge indicative of the political, economic and social currents in play at that time, is to consider only half the story. Unless it is accepted that cultural production is so caught in the web of social activity that it can achieve no critical distance from which to interrogate the norms by which such a web operates, then there is another side of the equation to analyse. Certainly cubist art illuminates a historical moment, but it does so precisely because it refuses to operate as an illustrator of a political monology, to be reduced to a mouthpiece for the dominant ideology and governing power of the Third Republic. Cubist art in fact functions as a fascinating and multi-faceted lens through which to view the political cross-currents of early twentieth century France, and the currents of thought into which art itself is drawn, at the moment of what seems to be their unprecedented intermingling. The foregoing thinkers would seem to posit 1910 as a historical moment when that intermingling became startlingly discernable, although it is reasonable to suggest that this moment stands in for more widely conceived cultural, philosophical or political changes. These three diverse speakers operate according to their own particular agendas in making use of 1910 in this way. While Woolf is keen to prompt innovation from literary progressives, and educated patience from their

readers, Allard seeks to instantiate a classicist nationalism at the heart of the salon cubist endeavour. Maurras makes use of his early political development to marshal cultural production into a role as indicator of social decay under the democratic Republic. Two key factors seem to link their thinking, and to explain why each takes 1910 as either a retrospectively significant date, or an apposite time for reflection. The first is perhaps more explicit: the way in which artistic output is increasingly becoming concerned with, and implicated in, the texture of “life itself” as it is drawn, with both positive and negative consequences, into the politico-economic realm constructed under France’s rapid modernisation within the modernist period. The second, it is possible to suggest, is the concept of space.

As chapter one observed, Henri Lefebvre also sees 1910 as a date of some significance, having to do with “spatial shattering” and the collapse of earlier certainties in the geometrical and philosophical realms. Further, he makes an implicit connection between new geometrical discoveries and philosophical thought. He notes that “Not so many years ago, the word ‘space’ had a strictly geometrical meaning: the idea it evoked was simply that of an empty area” (1). However, the spaces that are the true reference points of the writing of Woolf, Allard and Maurras are clearly not of the geometrical variety. Rather, they are the spaces that become clear when the term “space” itself is freed from purely geometrical application, and comes to have a meaning that is not exclusively tied to mathematical analysis. Just as the postulates of Euclid were challenged by the new geometries of the nineteenth century, and ultimately had to concede to a position as one among many possible conventions, so “space” as a term, formerly tied to this Euclidean geometry, begins to be usefully applied both in radical non-Euclidean geometry and elsewhere. Therefore Woolf, in her considerations of capturing Mrs. Brown, in fact concerns herself with the possibility, or relevance, of maintaining a sacrosanct metaphoric “space” for art in the twentieth century, i.e. a psychologically distinct arena (for both artist and audience) in which artistic creation can occur. Allard’s review makes reference to the pictorial space renegotiated by the work of Metzinger and his fellow cubists at the *Salon d’Automne*. He also allies two spheres previously considered to be antithetical, those of art and philosophy, and so joins Woolf in her questioning of the distance between cultural production and the wider experience of modernity. Maurras makes reference to the political stances carved out in this period, which increasingly fought for dominance over the metaphoric spaces constructed from endeavours

in the scientific, philosophical and artistic worlds as much as over concrete geographical space.<sup>1</sup>

Clearly, geometrical or philosophical space and political or ideological space are not so distant, and this fact has been illuminated by cubist art throughout its lifespan. According to contemporary and subsequent criticism cubism has, variously, used geometrical approaches to radically rethink pictorial space, flirted with the relativism of the new sciences, engaged with notions of space-time, and used popular critical publications to make connections between cubist art and the “fourth dimension” of contemporary thought. The link between cubism and philosophy, geometry and other branches of science is further discussed below. For now, it is worth noting that the cubist milieu explored the connections between space in the geometrical and pictorial register, as well as the ideological spaces of modernity. This connection, on occasion, served the milieu’s own political purposes and aided its ability to market cubist art works as stylistically singular works of genius. However, it has also left cubism open to political appropriation, denied it the claim to purely formal innovation frequently repeated by Picasso, and left it open to attack as an “anti-French” art form. The latter point makes clear that uniting the political movements of France in the first two decades of the twentieth century was a concern with geographical space, the space of the French nation and its geographical and ideological borders, in the face of a fast-approaching pan-European war. Rethinking the metaphoric spatial realm of geometry or the endeavour of art will therefore have an impact on the way in which the concrete space of international geography is considered.

While this period saw the colonisation of an unprecedented variety of areas of social thought by the newly-liberated space metaphor, and while cubist art found itself in a peculiar position to negotiate a variety of these spaces, it would be dangerous to confine an analysis of cubist art’s role in throwing light upon these changes in thought to the metaphorical. It is important to clarify just how the cultural output of an experimental modernism relates to Mrs. Brown, to life itself, characterised in the pre-War phase of cubism by a developing technological and economic modernisation. This modernisation was, for the cubists, visible in the context of Paris through an increasing proletarianisation of the labour forces under mass production demands, and the resultant Syndicalism that sought to redistribute the

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<sup>1</sup> See taxonomy of space, chapter one. France’s ruling powers sought to control not only the mutually sensually verifiable space of their country’s geography, but the metaphoric “space” of the country, made up of its values, rituals and beliefs. These were contested and recreated in the spheres of art, science and philosophy.



wealth of the bourgeoisie, gathered in the economic boom between 1901 and 1913. It was also apparent in the technological changes that were in the process of revolutionising not only the practices of production, but the nature of communication, travel, medicine and entertainment. In a critical analysis of Marshall Berman's All That Is Solid Melts Into Air: The Experience of Modernity, Perry Anderson has proposed a conjunctural explanation of the incidence of modernisation at the same historical moment as a rapidly innovating cultural output subsequently termed "modernism." Anderson's thinking helps to clarify just what 1910 stands in for, in Woolf and beyond. He suggests that, rather than occurring in a temporally delineated manner disjunct from previous epochs according to a kind of Lukácsian evolutionism, modernism is best understood as "a cultural field of force *triangulated* by three decisive coordinates" (9). These coordinates are academicism, developing technology and "the imaginative proximity of social revolution" (9). Academicism was without doubt a key issue for the cubists, who also found themselves in the thick of the battle over the related issues of classicism and the nature of art as institution. Picasso was consistent in his claims that formal innovation was at the heart of the cubist endeavour, albeit innovation that happened unconsciously. He therefore appears to draw cubism close to this particular coordinate, in order to take issue with academic norms. However, subsequent art historical criticism has suggested that, whilst much cubist innovation was radical in its rejection of such norms, its interrogation of academicism also involved, in certain cases, a rearticulation of the norms it purported, at least in Picasso's terms, to confront and reject. Anderson suggests that "the persistence of the 'anciens régimes' [for France, the still agrarian-based Third Republic] and the academicism concomitant with them, provided a critical range of cultural values *against which* insurgent forms of art could measure themselves, but also *in terms of which* they could partly articulate themselves" (10). Certain strands of cubism could be said to make such a move.

Cubism was also drawn, or in frequent instances dragged, toward a consideration of Anderson's other two coordinates. Technological developments, and in particular the alteration of working practices through the mechanisms of mass production became, in the time of the cubists, a hotly contested topic, ultimately made to stand for debates over the cultural heritage and craftsmanship capabilities of the French people. In addition, the proximity of social revolution was repeatedly felt due to the shifting positions of a variety of political currents, including Syndicalism and Solidarism. Attitudes to both French production and the world market, and the possibility and desirability of revolution, were contentious in the various factions of both the right and the left. Thus modernist art did find

itself “triangulated,” whatever its attempted resistance to the drag of these forces. It is therefore possible for Anderson to claim that “European modernism in the first years of this century flowered in the space between a still usable classical past, a still indeterminate technical present, and a still unpredictable political future” (10). Yet its triangulation, the pull of these various forces, made it impossible for this “space” to retain impervious borders. Cubist art contested its own space within the social system as a way of exploring and interrogating the metaphoric spaces behind each of these three coordinates. To look at modernist art as a cohesive and exclusively formal endeavour occupying a distinct social space is, however, to oversimplify and to blank out the historical and geographical particularity of aesthetic developments. By focusing on the specific innovations, appropriations and misunderstandings that make up what we now understand as cubism, it is possible to see the way in which it illustrated the relationship between cultural output and modernisation and spoke of the experience of modernity, albeit in a range of different voices. These voices speak of both metaphoric and concrete space wherever they occur, in order to illustrate not an epochal break but a particular conjuncture of spaces; one which we can see as symptomatic of modernist experience.

Ascribing cubism a place in a long progress-oriented history of aesthetic innovation is a move that has often occurred within art historical criticism, but it is also one that denies the operation of the movement a truly radical intent. A radical art would reject the tyranny of the calendar and the pressure of artistic precedents, and use a consideration of the nature of art and its function to create a proliferation of new and challenging artistic procedures. Some strands of cubism, whilst keen to innovate and interrogate, explicitly rejected the valorisation of the new as a forward march of artistic improvement eclipsing all preceding forms. Writing in 1911, Jean Metzinger suggests that “The men known as cubists are trying to imitate the masters, endeavouring to fashion new types (to the word *new* I attach the idea of *difference*, and exclude from it the idea of superiority or progress)” (“Cubism and Tradition” 66). Like the Conventionalist view of Euclidean postulates, cubist art was to be seen as a new, alternative practice that could be placed in contrast with, rather than dominance over, more traditional forms of art. Cubism’s key contribution is its status as a canvas-based form peculiarly attuned to the potential transgression of the space of that medium. It is therefore well placed to explore and negotiate the borders of newly metaphorically conceived, and newly contested, extra-aesthetic spaces. As a development of, or in Metzinger’s terms a *different* manifestation of, the plastic arts, cubism necessarily concerned itself with the possibility of representing dimensions beyond those suggested by

its resolutely two-dimensional canvas medium. It was also deeply involved in a consideration of the nature of the space of art in a rapidly modernising and market-oriented world. When cubist art and criticism begins to flirt with the new geometries, it returns to the original empty spaces of mathematics and demonstrates that such spaces have been, since the Renaissance, always already connected to political, religious, philosophical and social spaces. Through this illustration cubism also illuminates the story of the space metaphor itself, and its unprecedented currency in the early twentieth century.

### **Radical Innovations: Cubism and Plastic Form**

Written and published in 1912, Albert Gleizes and Jean Metzinger's *Du Cubisme* (henceforth Cubism) quickly became the best known of the pro-cubist critical writings of the period. Purporting to speak for all artists working in the new cubist style, it also launched a new literary form upon French readers: that of the artistic manifesto. However, far from articulating the opinions, innovations and intentions of an already cohesive cubist movement, the text in fact aimed to further the aesthetic, ideological, and quite possibly market-based, concerns of the salon cubists of the authors' immediate circle, creating a public perception of cubism as a common endeavour. This was far from the reality, and the various pictorial experiments of the artists working in the new style were in fact based upon, and appropriated by, a wide variety of political and philosophical stances. The apparently homogenous cubist milieu presented by Gleizes and Metzinger was about as stable a concept as that of the modernist avant-garde of which it formed a part. However, Cubism is a valuable resource for any assessment of the aesthetic innovations of the cubists, as its imposed cohesiveness of intent was, along with early twentieth century art criticism, responsible for the dominant interpretations of cubist art by the interested public at the time. It also makes clear some of the key innovations that can, in retrospect, be conceded as being central to the aesthetic developments of cubism's leading figures. The authors' enthusiastic and declamatory prose is loosely structured around norms of painting subsequently dislodged by the radical painterly practices of the cubists. Former truths include a rationally ordered approach to form and background, light and shade, line and plane, and colour values. These tools traditionally operate to aid the artist in an accurate or "realist" articulation of mass and void in logical proportion in a defined space. These truths were methodically exploded by the two central innovators of cubist art, Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque, and developed to varying extents amongst their many followers.

Picasso's *Les Femmes d'Alger (O.J.)* (fig. 1) has been called the first painting of the twentieth century (Rosenblum 15), despite the fact that it was painted in 1907, so radical was its difference from any preceding work, and so great its influence on subsequent art. Its planes and forms open and interpenetrate creating a bewildering foreshortening that drags both figures and ground into an extremely shallow pictorial space. It rejects the traditional logic of colour and light, liberating them to independent function, while at the same time foregrounding the fact of painting as artistic intervention, denying the simple perspicacity of its representations. Line also becomes a constructive element, creating forms rather than indicating a primary perspective. The hierarchy of pictorial significance facilitated by dominant perspective, be it painter – viewer, object – context, or intra-object, is denounced as dogmatic, and replaced by painterly principles which demand that ordering occur in response to a mental perception on the part of the artist, by-passing the misleading sensory information of the ocular. In thus rejecting the norms of Renaissance perspectivism, the *Femmes d'Alger* liberate the artist, and the viewer, from a perception that is already ordered. The rejection of a prescriptively perspectival ordering is clear in the use of faceting, which suggests the fragmentation of both figures and context, and creates a relativisation of subject matter that declines to structure the viewer's perception. While the painting's subsequent notoriety, fuelled by Picasso's inclusion of primitive mask-like faces for the two right-hand figures, makes it an anchor-point for today's understanding of what was to come to be known as cubism, there were key pictorial innovations that preceded it. Hardly the original cubist work in the terms in which we now understand the movement, the *Femmes d'Alger* are also untypical of subsequent cubist paintings, as they make use of a bright and varied palette, and strong narrative content, two features intentionally removed from the repertoire of both Picasso and Braque.

Some precedents to Picasso's infamous painting are therefore available, although they are often eclipsed by the notoriety attached to this work. In the summer of 1907, Braque was working in L'Estaque, painting a number of works whose geometrical simplicity, despite their rural subject matter, can be seen as forewarnings of cubism's imminent explosion. His *Landscape at L'Estaque* (1907) is one such example. By early 1909, Braque was developing this geometricised approach to aid him in a new understanding of pictorial space, and the restrictions of the canvas, work begun in his friend and rival's *Femmes d'Alger*. Braque's *Le Port (Harbour, Normandy)* of early 1909 (fig. 2), and the prominent exhibition in the *Salon des Indépendants* of the following April helped to consolidate an understanding of cubism as a new movement keen to disrupt the forms of its own practice. Braque and

Picasso then worked together during the summer of 1909, establishing a new conception of the contradictory spatiality of objects, and the solidity of intervening space, work which was already begun in the ambiguous spaces between figures in the *Demoiselles*. This materialisation of space had no perceptual counterpart in reality, but served to deny the traditional logic and hierarchy of pictorial order, and freed both artists towards startling discoveries of the limits of the canvas medium, and their potential transgression. It was around this time that cultural commentators began to search for a new critical language in which to couch the new pictorial language of Picasso and Braque. Mark Roskill suggests that the first use of the “cube” term appears in English critic Frank Rutter’s booklet of late 1910, *Revolution in Art: An Introduction to the Study of Cezanne, Gauguin, Van Gogh and other Modern Painters*, where he explains that Braque has “a new vision of form [. . .] building up his paintings with a series of cubes” (qtd. in Roskill 52). However, in a pastiche account of the range of new isms being born in the contemporary moment, Louis Vauxcelles had in September 1909 referred to “Peruvian cubists” as a pejorative joke, although Jeffrey Weiss suggests that the “cube” term had gained an ism suffix as early as Spring 1909, in the press furor surrounding the *Salon des Indépendents* (Weiss 56).

By 1912, Gleizes and Metzinger’s catalogue of innovations was possible, explicitly tied to the work of the cubists. While fragmentation and multiple perspectives grabbed the contemporary headlines, several other innovations were central to the development of cubist art. A negotiation with the values of colour, light and shade was one such innovation, tied as it was, through the indication of shadow, to perspective, mass, and the possibility of recessive space. Arbitrary conjunctions of light and shade drew the viewer toward the conclusion that what they were confronting was not shading, but merely the use of darker and lighter paint. By rejecting an illusory spatial logic, and conjoining surprising areas of paint free from predetermined colour values, the painters return the viewer to the materiality of the oils. Thus Gleizes and Metzinger announce that “the Cubists taught a new way of imagining light” (*Cubism* 11), and that “the properties of each portion [of the canvas] must be left independent, and the plastic continuity must be broken into a thousand surprises of light and shade” (12). Explored not as distinct opposites in a distribution familiar from everyday experience, but as a series of constructional elements in a persistent state of tension, these traditionally constructional elements become independent from the drive towards representation. Gleizes and Metzinger also seem to suggest that these thousand surprises of both colour and form should be recomposed in the mind of the viewer of the cubist work, and that this offers a kind of freedom to the viewer, who uses his/her mental



spaces to link subjectivities with the genius of the artist, rather than having his/her thoughts rigorously delineated by a pictorial intermediary structured by illusory perspective. However, in recomposing the oppositions of colour, shade and form carefully established in the work, in shoring the fragments, albeit in the mind, the canvas is returned to order. The suggestion here is that the painting presents merely a game to be played, that fragmentation is merely a stage on the way to a completion or “solving” of the picture/puzzle. The work thus invites a re-imposition of the academic norms that the artist has apparently been at pains to reject.

The cubist work in this conception therefore seems to offer only a limited freedom, a clear instance in which Gleizes and Metzinger’s declamatory text overwrites the apparent intentions of the Picasso circle who were more radical in their flouting of pictorial norms. Yet the manifesto served an important function, coherently announcing cubism’s already widely perceived rejection of realism, which was in fact strongly debated within the avant-garde. For if realism secures the common recognition of shared social practices, then cubism’s rejection of the realist project offers a freedom from the dogmatism of enforced social structures, but also potentially negates the possibility of a consolidated political stance. The manifesto form attempts to recoup the power of the united voice, and to mobilise a cohesive artistic movement. Cubism does this, however, in terms that benefit the profile and market value of cubist works, suggesting that such liberating innovation is underscored by an economic imperative that ostensibly belongs more to France’s ruling powers than to the artistic avant-garde. For Gleizes and Metzinger, cubist art is the primary possibility for a plastic articulation of modernity, whose difference eclipses the possibility of all others. However, it is also fundamentally concerned with what a painting means as an aesthetic construct, now that it has ceased to be merely an ideologically uninflected medium for the presentation of content in a realist manner. In this way cubism is painting the story of its own coming into being as it develops as a style. This stylistic development, and stylistic autonomy, would lead to Picasso and Braque leaving works unsigned, so distinctive were the works in non-cubist terms, and so indistinguishable as the product of either artist. Such development would also lead to the notion of the series in painting, and thence, of course, to market value. Roskill explicates the cubist practice of series painting in relation to Monet’s habit of painting and repainting similar subjects, as in his famous Cathedrals, “in which each treatment leads on to the next and makes possible, through its findings and their implications, what takes place there in the way of further development” (38). This process of stylistic development has something in common with the nature of scientific experiment. Yet

it also has the ring of the mass product about it, albeit that the economic connection is not so bald, since the series approach certainly builds a marketable reputation and distinctiveness.

The portraits painted by Picasso during 1910 and 1911 demonstrate additional innovations to those undertaken in the previous decade, building upon the work of the summer of 1909, and giving the authors of Cubism further works to explain to the public. The *Portrait of Ambroise Vollard* is one example (fig. 3). The portraits are complex in comparison to the geometrically simplified or overtly primitive shapes of Braque and Picasso's earlier work, and demonstrate a concern with the picture plane through processes of faceting that increasingly align with the flat two-dimensionality of the canvas. This concern with the surface, and its motivating interrogation of the restrictions of the canvas medium, was to culminate in the use of pasted paper procedures (see chapter three). The works also demonstrate a newly restricted palette, encouraging a focus on form and content, rather than on visual pleasure. Christopher Butler has therefore claimed of the portraits that "the painter who wants us to think about the critical category of [plastic] space is allowing his work to become to some degree about painting itself" (64). Gleizes and Metzinger also make an oblique reference to this intention when they state that "at present, Cubism is painting itself" (Cubism 4). The authors refer primarily to cubism's having so shattered previous conceptions that it is the only conceivable way to paint that is left standing in the contemporary cultural world. However, the phrase can also be made to speak of the radical practice of the cubist artists, and particularly of Picasso and Braque, to mark their works with the process of a plastic coming into being. Cubism is thus "painting itself" into existence, whilst foregrounding the precise painterly interventions and procedures that make these plastic creations possible.

Following the portraits, Braque and Picasso built on the impact of a restricted palette by adding restrictions of content. Focusing on nudes of half or two thirds view, and on the café tables and advertisements of Montmartre, the two painters established a repertoire of content that was to prove central to their subsequent work in the *papiers collés*. Elsewhere, in circles associated with the salon cubists, artists were depicting the modern city, Parisian bridges, and even, in the case of Delaunay, the Eiffel Tower. This fact led to criticism of Braque and Picasso for hermetic painting practices with an elitist content relevant only to their immediate milieu. It is possible that, for the two painters, the café still lifes encapsulated the experience of living in a modern city. Or perhaps they were only concerned with avant-garde life, making use of the environment in which they worked. As Butler

explains, however, an interpretation of the significance of cubist content is just the kind of action that Picasso and Braque were keen to discourage, for “on modernist premises, you could make art to see what happened, rather than attempt to satisfy a contract to produce a particular kind of effect upon an audience” (75).

It is clear that, although Cubism offers a valuable insight into some cubist innovations, and certainly serves to illustrate the importance of the manifesto form, its economic impact, and its role in the public perceptions of an ism, it is also misleading in its singular interpretations of cubist intent. Retrospectively, it is possible to see that the input of Picasso and Braque is underrepresented by the authors, and that the voice lent to them is often at odds with what appears to be the intention of their works. The reluctance of both painters to speak about their own aims explicitly, or even to admit to something that approximates to an artistic project, has compounded the problem. When Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler inquires of Picasso what he is currently engaged in, in essence what is happening to cubism, Picasso quotes the notice customarily attached to the bridge of steamers that work the Seine: “It is forbidden to speak to the pilot” (qtd. in Roskill 22). Aware of his own significance as prime innovator, Picasso is reluctant to take part in the discursive battles both surrounding cubism, and splitting its various strands from within. Gleizes and Metzinger are therefore the primary guides that cubism has left to posterity. The authors make reference to Gustave Courbet to illustrate the wide-ranging implications of a rejection of illusory art facilitated by Renaissance perspectivism. “He remained a slave to the worst visual conventions,” they claim, “he accepted without the slightest intellectual control everything his retina communicated” (3). Gleizes and Metzinger suggest that Courbet’s realist project led him to place too great a value on the appearance of objects as they strike the eye, whereas by contrast the contemporary cubist is aware of the fact that “the visible world only becomes the real world by the operation of thought, and that the objects which strike us with the greatest force are not always those whose existence is richest in plastic truths” (3). This plastic truth was, for the cubists, to be found through a transition from a primarily retinal engagement with the shapes of modernity, to an essentially conceptual one. This is perhaps cubism’s greatest contribution to a rethinking of the nature of the plastic arts, and was certainly responsible for much of the outrage generated by cubist works displayed in the first two decades of the century.

For all their claims to radical practice, Gleizes and Metzinger were writing at a time when cubist art was still restricted to the canvas, and to oil paint, medium of the very

academic painters against whom the new art form sought to rail. By the time of *Cubism*'s publication in December 1912, Picasso and Braque were a significant way in to their experiments with *papiers collés*, which would lead to the transformation of the canvas surface through such radical interventions as texturised paint, pasted papers, superimposed perishable objects and commercial Ripolin enamel. In related works, both Braque and Picasso moved towards the sculptural in the form of three-dimensional paper constructs. In the earliest phases of Picasso's experimentation with *papiers collés* and paper sculpture he indicates his frustration with the canvas medium when he writes to his co-pioneer "my dear friend Braque, I am using your latest paperistic and powdery procedures. I am in the process of conceiving a guitar and I use a little dust against our horrible canvas" (qtd. in Poggi 31). Yet Gleizes and Metzinger suggest that cubist innovation had already, at their time of writing in early 1912, transfigured the activity of painting in oils, and escaped the trap of the two-dimensionality of the canvas. They claim that "today oil painting allows us to express supposedly inexpressible notions of depth, density, and duration, and encourages us to present, according to a complex rhythm, a veritable fusion of objects within a restricted space" (5). Within the "restricted" space of the canvas medium, the cubists reject the long-established task of the plastic arts to represent three-dimensional objects, in order to achieve a sense of depth that moves beyond three dimensions toward the "inexpressible." In addition, Gleizes and Metzinger suggest that through rejecting the eye-deceiving practices of illusionistic three-dimensional space, the cubists are able to transcend the very nature of their spatial art form, and represent duration, or the flow of time. This idea of *durée* is taken from popular accounts of Bergsonian theory, and became a major way of interpreting, often misleadingly, the multiple perspectives incorporated in the cubist canvas. The idea had a particular attraction for cubist apologists, and for many subsequent art historical analyses, precisely because it suggested the transcendence of the spatial form attributed to the plastic arts. As discussed below, such appropriations of contemporary scientific discourse were frequently more obfuscatory than explanatory, and were responsible for many of the miscomprehensions, and political misappropriations, of the cubist endeavour.

Gleizes and Metzinger are keen to analyse the audience of this new art, and to answer the detractors of the cubists, who by 1912 had already made themselves heard in the critical sphere and the popular press. Their explanation for the resistance expressed by contemporary viewers puts forward an evolutionary theory for the faculty of comprehension. The cubist artists are merely, in their creative abilities, running ahead of the capacity of the masses to understand their work. Hence, in the fullness of time, cubist art will be revealed as

“the only possible conception of pictorial art” (Cubism 4), for “A man will enjoy today what exasperated him yesterday” (Cubism 5). The authors ask, “how could comprehension evolve as rapidly as the creative faculties? It follows in their wake” (5). Thus a select group of visionaries has transcended the capabilities of average human perception and understanding, which must evolve in order to keep pace with this illuminating view of the world, not as it appears, but as it is in truth, as felt by the mind.

Two years before the publication of Cubism, Metzinger had written a widely read “Note on Painting,” and was already establishing himself, through such critical work, as the head of the new cubist style, a misapprehension maintained in the minds of the public through Picasso’s reluctance to speak about, or to publicly exhibit, his work. In this short article, published in the prominent Parisian journal Pan, Metzinger claims of Picasso and Braque, along with Delaunay and Le Fauconnier, that “they are too enlightened to believe in the stability of any system, even one called classical art” (“Note” 59). Throughout subsequent reconsiderations of the extensive critical output surrounding cubism, the rejection or purposeful foregrounding of representational systems has been identified as a key thrust of the innovations of cubist art. This theme is also central to the final passages of Cubism, in which the authors note that “If [ . . . ] by feebleness or lack of intellectual control, the painter remains enslaved to the forms in common use, his work will delight the crowd – his work? the crowd’s work – and will sadden the individual” (14). As is evident in their vehement rejection of Renaissance perspectivism, the cubists are at pains to dismantle a dogmatism that structures the responses of the masses, but negates the possibility of individual interpretation. At first it appears that this move is an intentional emancipation of the observer of a work of art, who will be freed from pictorial convention, “tatters of the great *collective* lie” (Cubism 15, my emphasis), and liberated towards the possibility of a singular, personal interpretation of any given work. However, the final paragraphs of Gleizes and Metzinger’s manifesto undercuts this liberation, by claiming that art must henceforth communicate in its own, new and uncertain language in order to “move, to dominate, to direct, and not in order to be understood” (18). The elitism implicit in that final clause, suggesting that comprehension by the masses is no aim of the new art, was a charge frequently brought against cubism as a movement. For all its radical destabilisation of the norms of academic art, and the procedures of perception, cubism, through the manifesto form, here succumbs to the reinstantiation of a singular truth. It may be a truth that questions the nature of its own operation, but, for Gleizes and Metzinger, it is still one that must be communicated to the masses, “for there is only one truth, ours, when we impose it on



everyone" (18). Through their manifesto, the authors were certainly keen to impose one truth: a centralised and coordinated cubist endeavour. However, the structure of the cubist milieu, the variations among individual painterly practices within it, and the organisation of the wider Parisian avant-garde of which it formed a part, betrayed the real multiplicity of the project. As fragmented and riven with conflict as the Parisian political life to which it bore at once an interrogative and heavily implicated relationship, the avant-garde was neither willing nor able to speak with a single voice.

### **The Avant-Garde: Cubism and the Liminal**

The avant-garde was, in the first two decades of the twentieth century, as multitudinous in perspectives as the early cubist works of Picasso and Braque. Its composition included a variety of ethnicities, due to the immigration of many foreign artists, in some cases exiled from their own countries, in others attracted by the increasingly international reputation of the Right Bank as an arena of innovation and cultural community. Political affiliations varied widely as a result of this cosmopolitanism. Montmartre had long been a paradoxical site before mass culture and artistic milieu became locked in the stand-off that ultimately resulted in the collapse of the latter. The eighteenth arrondissement had been the heart of the Commune, the 1871 social experiment in which Paris attempted a secession from the nation. "Bloody Week," during which French troops were sent in to the area to suppress the uprising, had marked Montmartre's concrete space with the blood of 20,000 radical opponents to the Third Republic. The territories of the avant-garde also contained an interesting juxtaposition of classes. Impoverished artists were attracted to the relatively cheap garrets and studio spaces available, whilst many young bourgeois writers found the Right Bank and its *petites revues* a useful training ground, before making the geographical and political transition to the established newspapers of the city. Cottington has described the shape of the avant-garde as "a composite and unstable social matrix, fractured not only [. . .] by ideological antagonisms and class interests, but additionally by the pressures of [. . .] a rapidly evolving institutional and art-market framework" (3). Despite this fragmented composition, the concept of "an avant-garde" as a delineated social formation gained currency both within its milieu, and within French society beyond its supposed borders. This notion of a homogenous avant-garde served the purposes of those who asserted a project of aesthetic progress with a critical distance from wider French social life, those who sought to demonise the new art practices and replace them with an art of the French people tied to a heavily circumscribed and craft-based social praxis, and those looking to drive and profit

from this burgeoning art market. The avant-garde's rarefied aesthetic space, in both ideological and concretely geographical terms, was therefore heavily contested, while at the same time gaining an unprecedented political and economic currency.

Cubism shared the avant-garde with a rapidly expanding number of other isms, their identities established, and often misleadingly labelled, in the critical press of the day. From the literary Symbolists to Alfred Jarry's proto-Dada Pataphysicians, the opportunities to mix ideas, influences and practices were many and varied. The cubist milieu was itself split in two according to affiliations of friendship and broad similarities in formal practices. It is telling that the two groups are best distinguished by the means through which they chose to show, and therefore market, their works. Picasso and Braque were originally based in the *Bateau Lavoir* studios of Montmartre, and sold their works through private dealerships, culminating in a contract with Kahnweiler that gave him the exclusive ownership of their entire artistic output. The Puteaux or salon cubists included Gleizes, Metzinger, Fernand Léger and Delaunay; they displayed their work in the public salons. Now widely considered to be followers of Picasso and Braque's innovations, they were at the time taken as the official manifestation of cubism. This perception stemmed from their choice of the salon-based, more public approach to the art market, and from their willingness to speak about their art in critical publications and national newspapers. In the clamour of the contemporary press, those that shouted loudest were often responsible for the formation of public opinion, regardless of the accuracy of their accounts of artistic innovation.

The institution of art may be understood as the cultural apparatus governing the production and reception of artistic output, ordered and legislated by the dominant power, and often structured according to past epochs, its operations lagging behind the pace of modernisation, and of innovation in the arts. French art at the time of the cubists was therefore governed by the Third Republic, still semi-aristocratic, and dominated by the academies and salons of the previous century. In a study of French cultural identity in the twentieth century, Herman Lebovics has suggested that, beginning around 1900, various political strands became increasingly obsessed with the creation of a consolidated French national identity, a "tyranny of solidarity" (Lebovics xii). From the turn of the twentieth century, the search for a cohesive French identity becomes integralist, "at the same time deeply cultural and politically conservative [. . .] it was nothing less than the construction of a moral majority, when a political one was wanting" (Lebovics 8). As observed above, the formal innovations of cubist art foregrounded the process of artistic production, and

identified painting as a mediatory practice of re-presentation. However, it is possible to argue that this concern with process went deeper into the structures of French society, and that cubist artists, from their position within the contemporary avant-garde, came to question the institutional status of art, or rather the nature of art *as institution*. They were aided in this endeavour by a burgeoning avant-garde whose liminal or autonomous space in Parisian life was contested, and by a textual explosion in which avant-garde explicators and bewildered critics debated the political and broad social significance of all modern art.

Art as institution under the control of the Republic at first appears to offer a considerable degree of freedom from the state. At the time of the cubists, the 1881 law relinquishing control of the salons, in effect an early privatisation, was still in place. However, the Republic's interest in this ostensibly unfettered artistic development was largely pecuniary. Artists freed from state control would, it was hoped, be able to create works of individual, creative genius that would aid France in its continued domination of the international market in luxury goods. In addition, the hanging committees of what were still referred to as the "public salons" were often highly politicised, their idea of artistic genius carefully tied to the maintenance of a (highly marketable) Frenchness. Concomitant with this privatisation came, as Cottington has noted, a nationalisation of the country's cultural heritage. An 1887 law had established a *Commission des Monuments Historiques* and a newly powerful *Ministère des Beaux Arts*. Under this supervision, the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries witnessed the swift development of an academic body of art historians, museum curators and archaeologists, and, in 1883, the establishment of the first university chairs in art history and archaeology (Cottington 12). Control in the cultural sphere as a means of broader political control and nation-consolidation has a lengthy history within the Third Republic. Cottington has noted that, throughout the 1880s and 1890s, the Republic "made use of the prestige and co-optive potential of art to buttress the troubled Third Republic in both economic and ideological terms" (12).<sup>2</sup> Poised somewhere between the economic imperative of market domination, and the social imperative of a stabilised notion of French culture, this newly institutionalised art was a formidable foe for the avant-garde. Cottington claims that the institutionalisation of art in the period of the Third Republic amounts to an attempted consolidation of the French history of art, which was mobilised to construct a unified and immortal French race in possession of common, durable

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<sup>2</sup> Further information regarding the careful policing of the French art institution can be found in Orwicz.

cultural and aesthetic values (12-3). With this in mind, it is inevitable that the prevalence of foreign artists within the Parisian avant-garde would seem problematic to the Republic.

Within cubist works, art as institution appears to make the transition from a situation informing art production and reception, to the content of the work of art itself. Astradur Eysteinnsson, via Habermas, notes that Aestheticist art offered the bourgeoisie the possibility of a contemplation of its ideals, and a view of happiness that was simply suspended in contemporary daily life. In the radical art of the avant-garde, this possibility is removed, and the bourgeoisie finds instead the negation of its social practice (Eysteinnsson 168). Habermas and Adorno both perceive a value in the “radicalised relationship between form and content” (Eysteinnsson 169) found in the counter-cultural operations of avant-garde art. Within this form/content dialectic lies “the potential reactivation of the *distance* implied in the relative autonomy of art, a distance allowing for a critical endeavour vis-à-vis the capitalist-bourgeois life-praxis” (Eysteinnsson 169). Eysteinnsson seems to suggest that it is the negotiation with form, with the notion of art itself, which enables the avant-garde to establish a critical distance from existing social life. This claim comes about because the transition from Aestheticist art, in which form matches absolutely the norms of the bourgeois society, to avant-garde art, which challenges those norms at their philosophical roots, has been made. By questioning the nature of art through the foregrounding of form and rejection of academic norms, cubism interrogates the possibility and function of a sacrosanct sphere of pure aesthetics, and highlights the issue of the interrelationship between cultural practices and the realities of urban existence in modernity. Cubism’s attack on the art institution was essentially three-fold, emphasising function, production and reception. It queried the purpose or function of art works via an increasingly repetitive choice of subject matter that questions art’s role of providing a space for spiritual or philosophical contemplation. In the form of the *papiers collés*, Picasso and Braque also played with the potential of art works to exist for long periods of time in their original state, and thus through the use of perishable materials denied them the possibility of speaking to future generations, as an aesthetic inheritance of “Frenchness.” In addition, as outlined above, the production of art works was foregrounded through a concern to show painterly intervention on the finished canvas, in a way that made processes of creation as much part of the content of the work as the subject matter itself. Finally, reception of the works was also under question, as the art-viewing public struggled to deal with an art that looked, intentionally, unlike anything that had preceded it.

However, the very works which art historical analysis has identified as questioning the status of art as institution and its interrelationship with the wider social sphere were also frequently considered to be hermetic. Through its concern with artistic practice, and with the institutional organisation and dissemination of art works, cubism often seemed to contemporary observers to be distanced from the praxis of social life in an unprecedented way. Such hermeticism, conflated with elitism in the critical and popular press, was one of the key charges brought against the artistic avant-garde at this time. It led to mistrust from the public, anger from the academies, and accusations of “anti-French” sentiments from the dominant power of the Third Republic. If the debate over the hermetic, elitist or insincere character of modern art is one key strand in considerations of the avant-garde, the other is perhaps the possibility of hermeticism, or autonomy, for the structure of the avant-garde itself. It is extremely problematic to uncover in retrospect the precise topography of the battle over the ideological or metaphoric space of the avant-garde, so complex and contradictory are the strands of political thought of the time. Both the dominant power of the Third Republic and the avant-garde milieu are caught in apparently paradoxical positions, wavering between requiring a distance and a proximity for this avant-garde. The Third Republic’s efforts towards curating a national, institutionalised art demonstrate that the Republic valued a rarefied aesthetic sphere as a space of societal self-contemplation, and the formation of a stabilised national identity. Yet this “high” function of art, logically dependent on a disjunct contemplative aesthetic sphere is, in the early twentieth century, facilitated by the moderated conjunction of aesthetic practice with the craft traditions now increasingly displaced by mechanised production. Thus, while Peter Bürger’s seminal study of the avant-garde suggests that the historical avant-gardes (from which he in fact excludes cubism) aim to realign art with social praxis (Bürger 22), this tactic is here appropriated by the dominant power, in the interests of economics and nation-consolidation.

The cubist avant-garde’s own aims are no less complex. Picasso and Braque were keen to remain aloof from the critical clamour of the day, and to undertake what they felt to be exclusively formal experiments. However, the innovations of the cubist movement as a whole (as subsequently established through art historical analysis, and resisted by Picasso and Braque) were keen to establish an anti-academicism, a concern with commodity culture, and a negotiation with daily Montmartrean life. The cubist milieu as represented by Apollinaire, Gleizes and Metzinger was, far from being obsessed only with formal innovation, concerned in a more broad and interrogative sense with the political climate and the state of contemporary life. For these writers, an autonomous aesthetic sphere, in terms



not proscribed by the Republic, was essential not for the sake of peace within which to develop radical formal structures, but for the sake of a critical distance. The early twentieth century avant-garde found itself increasingly implicated in a triangulation of forces that echoes Anderson's observations regarding cultural modernism discussed above: aesthetics, politics and economics. It is within this field of force that the battle over autonomy, or critical distance facilitated by social liminality, took place. While increasingly vocal when proclaiming its own latest aesthetic developments, the avant-garde was also pulled, with varying degrees of willingness on the part of individual painters, towards the many political currents of the time, and towards the market practices of the developing capitalist economy. Through the very vehemence of their reiteration of their own daring aesthetic projects, their newness, and their birth in the cultural think-tank of the Right Bank, the various factions of the avant-garde in fact drove the market for art speculation. Questioning the autonomy of art as institution, and working in an increasingly market-driven cultural sphere, it would seem illogical for the cubists, or other factions, to presume that a critical distance or ideological separation of the avant-garde was, in reality, possible. In fact, the autonomy or critical liminality of the avant-garde became a practical impossibility at the very moment that its *apparent* autonomy became a significantly potent marketing strategy, and a means of resistance to political appropriation.

A textual explosion occurs around the avant-garde at this time, an aurora of letters generated by this imperative proclamation of aesthetic innovation and autonomy. On the receiving end of such information was a bewildered public who, recognising the tenor of these statements from the burgeoning Parisian advertising industry, were increasingly wary of being duped. Thus the term avant-garde in this period operates not only to denote a designated group of artists and writers working at the forefront of aesthetic innovation, but as an adjective describing a strategy or ideology. Allard was the first to coin the term "avant-gardism," and in doing so linked the strategy explicitly to textual output, and market-oriented intent. "*Avant-gardism* is not only an absurdity, it is an affliction," he notes, "where the independent talent is forced to adhere to the category represented by his district [. . .]. Custom has it that the artist present his work wrapped in printed paper, in the self-serving manner of the manifesto, preface and commentary" (qtd. in Weiss 60). Allard's comments, written in 1913, draw out several key issues of the time. First, the district dominates the artist. In the face of proliferating isms, the commentators of the day had recourse to the comparatively stable geographical emplacement of the avant-garde, which often reflected the affiliations of artists, as they clustered around now famous cafés such as

the *Lapin Agile*, or shared studio spaces. While attaching oneself to a group or movement gave the individual artist a greater chance at effective promotion, gallery space and, therefore, a living, Allard suggests that such clustering stifles the creative talents of the single mind. Second, Allard refers to the importance of texts in the period, including the *petites revues* of the various political or aesthetic affiliations of the avant-garde, the national press, the manifesto and the “preface,” written for the exhibition catalogues, and sometimes reprinted in the press. The individual work becomes “wrapped” in this printed paper, just as the individual artist becomes wrapped in his avant-garde affiliations. The work, for Allard, becomes lost among these other voices. The strategy of avant-gardism is therefore both economically self-serving and promotionally self-aggrandising, but also an “affliction,” as increasingly declamatory texts colonise the art world. Yet these tactics were not entirely unprecedented; a parallel colonisation was occurring on the streets of Paris.

The period of cubism’s birth and development is conjunct with a larger cultural phenomenon of modernity: the advertising industry. The economic boom of the first thirteen years of the century was founded on the advanced industrialisation of the country’s means of production. Mass production was not universally accepted as progress, given that it resulted in the proletarianisation of a vast tract of the country’s skilled workers, and in doing so further enriched the bourgeoisie. Resistance to the process was largely responsible for the growth of Syndicalism in the period. However, the transition to mass production had to be facilitated by an increase in the demand for the new amongst the French public, an ongoing revolution of tastes and needs. While the establishment of key department stores such as *Bon Marché* (annex opened 1912) and *La Samaritaine* (established 1903) gave Paris its most visible manifestation of the drive to buy mass products, including most prominently furniture and fashion, the wheels of the new economy were oiled by increasingly innovative advertising practices. Allard’s observation of the invasion of the aesthetic sphere by printed material therefore found a corollary in the colonisation of the city spaces of Paris and its environs by the language of advertising. In addition to vastly increased newspaper circulation, and the use of handbills and brochures in the streets, the period also gave birth to the practice of papering public monuments with the incitement to buy, as well as the use of the tellingly named “*barre-la-vue*” or billboard, which began encroaching upon rural space on the outskirts of the city. It is no wonder that in these conditions of a continuous and unprecedented visual assault asserting newness and innovation, public perception began to equate the critical noise surrounding the avant-garde with the strategies and grand claims of advertising. Art movements preceding that of cubism and its contemporaries had

certainly generated shock. The works of the Impressionists or Matisse, for example, were able to shift public perceptions about the capacities of painting as a form, and at the same time had their detractors. However, the avant-garde of which cubism formed a part was perhaps the first to mobilise shock as a marketing tool, and to establish it as one of the defining characteristics of the avant-garde formation itself. Shock came to denote the public response to newness in aesthetic developments, and was therefore sought by artists keen to establish that they had truly been *avant-garde*, and arrived at a new concept before potential artistic followers had had a chance to imitate or refine their ideas. Weiss notes that, in the cubist period, “the prime mover is *arrivisme*; young artists are in a hurry; and to be a laggard, or *attardé*, is a fundamental contemporary fear” (55).

The proliferation of declamatory texts catches the avant-garde in a paradox. Joining in the practice of *réclame* is now an essential part of announcing, considering and reviewing artistic innovation. However, it also adds to the clamour of circulating texts, thus contributing to the difficulty of becoming heard, and further suggesting that the value of your particular innovation is relative to the others presented in this same manner. The textual economy of aesthetic practice in this period thus comes to suggest, contrary to the declarations of the manifesto, in fact precisely because of these, that any particular ism is to be considered alongside, or in a relative relationship to, other innovations of the day. It also, unhelpfully, implies a relation to the claims of the advertising world, demoting the ism from its innovative status to a potentially false and ultimately pecuniary claim to newness. Andreas Huyssen has suggested that an antagonistic yet mutually dependent relationship between the artistically progressive and the mass cultural can be seen as a significant structural feature in the development of modernist artistic practices. This relationship is underscored by the willingness of cubist explicators and apologists to become involved in the strategies of commercial advertising. Huyssen claims that “modernism constituted itself through a conscious strategy of exclusion, an anxiety of contamination by its other: an increasingly consuming and engulfing mass culture,” and that “both the strengths and the weaknesses of modernism as an adversary culture derive from that fact” (Huyssen vii). The complex relationship of the avant-garde with the mass cultural is also noted by Thomas Crow when he suggests that it may be described as a “necessary brokerage between high and low, in which the avant-garde serves as a kind of research and development arm to the culture industry” (Crow 35). Trusting investment in the claims of public texts, be they the proclamations of the avant-garde or of the nearest department store, diminished in proportion with their prevalence, a textual double bind from which the avant-garde seemed

both unable and unwilling to extricate itself. In turn, the language of art criticism deployed the terms of the avant-garde against it. Thus, “the critic intones the ism as a pejorative response to the perceived perpetration of stylistic excess; it serves to italicize his mistrust” (Weiss 57).

The term “cubism,” introduced in an ironic fashion by Vauxcelles, was adopted by the Puteaux group in full knowledge of its negative implications. For a group whose means of exhibition was the public salon, the high profile of the term, with its pre-established, although pejorative, critical currency was ideal. For the key spokesmen of this cubist milieu, it seemed that all publicity was good publicity, an innovative stance for an artistic movement, traditionally stabilised and promoted through positive criticism. For Metzinger, Apollinaire, André Salmon and others, the ism served its purpose, consolidating an identity, suggesting a shocking rupture from previous conventions, and making the name of the movement its very own marketable commodity. Picasso and Braque were unable to escape the efficacy of the term, much as they largely maintained a silence over what cubism might mean, or even regarding their membership of the nominal group.

The “mistrust” of the public towards claims of artistic innovation stemmed, as we have seen, from the fact that textual tactics of bluff were familiar to this public from the extravagant claims of advertising. Scepticism in turn led to an often angry critical reception for the isms. Neither was mistrust restricted to the manifestos and *réclame* of the avant-garde, as it began to segue into a suspicion of the art itself. As cubist art and its textual accompaniments, Allard’s printed paper wrappings, began to flirt with contemporary science, both the critical press and the public would have more reason for accusations of wilful mystification and elitism. Again, the avant-garde felt itself compelled to continually contribute to the critical “noise,” establishing ever more extravagant claims as the field of the avant-garde took on the tenor of the competitive environment of the commercial sphere. The audience for art had to be dazzled by newness, and a claim to originality became both problematic and essential for isms whose aesthetic autonomy and commercial welfare depended upon the different. Weiss reports that in February 1912, a periodical of the advertising field, *La Publicité*, published an article by its editor D.C.A. Hémet, proclaiming that the modern man “carries within him an obscure need to be dazzled, deluded, fooled by *mise-en-scène* and décor; the naked truth makes him afraid, or is insufficient” (qtd. in Weiss 73). The man of modernity has come to expect or demand the revolution of tastes that drives the contemporary market economy. Despite the mistrust and scepticism generated by

the new art and its commercialised tactics of avant-gardism, this demand was also felt as an underlying compulsion in the aesthetic sphere, now exposed as a metaphoric space not entirely disjunct from the commercial.

This demand for the new did, however, pave the way for a new kind of modernist neurosis: that of the confidence trick of modern art. Since the tenor of artistic *réclame* was increasingly becoming indistinguishable from that of *publicité*, public scepticism extended to a level that not only doubted the sincerity of individual works or individual claims to innovation, but that also questioned the impulse behind, or even the existence of, entire isms, or of the entire project of modern art. Art market speculators or *dénicheurs*, whose future profits depended on the long term establishment and profitability of nascent schools and their works, were made nervous by the possibility of sham schools. The bourgeois snob was also anxious that his purchases prove to be those of an educated and forward-thinking art lover, rather than those of an easily hoaxed amateur. In this climate of grand claims, and with art taking shapes that had no historical precedent, cubism found, along with the other isms of the modernist avant-garde, that its statements, and its art, were under interrogation. The murky waters of this newly commercial art market also facilitated the political appropriation of isms or individual painters, even if their own political affiliations ran to the contrary. Alongside the newly exposed institutional workings of art within French society, this factor put art and politics into contiguity in a newly public way.

### **Republican Modernity: Cubism and Political Engagement**

In the period of cubism's development, the avant-garde and the textual furore surrounding it caused considerable problems for a government that was, like the dominant power of all preceding epochs, attempting to consolidate the institutionalisation of aesthetic praxis. This battle was at once imperative, in the face of the approaching war, and highly problematic, given that the attempt occurred at the moment that the avant-garde, and particularly cubist art, was exposing the processes that maintained art as institution. French national identity was the critical issue, and the aesthetic sphere became a contested space in which the Third Republic sought to forge a craft-based art of the nation tied to a circumscribed and often outmoded social life of the people, whilst the avant-garde fought for an increasingly problematic aesthetic autonomy, albeit one that was by now heavily inflected with the commercial.



While the geography of the avant-garde became the final recourse for those attempting its ideological consolidation, and while the “district” was, as Allard points out, one possibility for mapping its fragments, all other aspects of the avant-garde phenomenon were on the move in the first two decades of the twentieth century. Fractured from within, it neither could nor would retain a single metaphoric district. Traffic across its ideological boundaries was intense pre-1914, as France undertook the dual projects of defining its nationhood, and ensuring its prominence on the world market. Given the often elusive meaning of avant-garde works, and the fact that their newness, as Cubism explained, presupposed the future achievement of as yet undeveloped critical faculties, much of this traffic was centred upon the discourse surrounding the art works themselves. Critical hardware was amassed on either side of the debated borders of the avant-garde. While on the one side the *petites revues* multiplied on a monthly basis, on the other academic institutionalisation of art historical analysis and vast increases in newspaper circulation turned the spotlight on this *réclame*. For all Gleizes and Metzinger’s claims about the importance of the individual interpretative moment, the discursive field surrounding art works or movements was the new site of interpretation, as all tried to make the claim that “there is only one truth, ours, when we impose it on everyone” (Cubism 18). This imposition of truth, and the establishment of “correct” interpretation was one way in which the various factions of the avant-garde attempted to set out their aesthetic and ideological stalls. Yet the very notion of “correct” meaning had a considerable appeal for the political currents of the day, especially those whose project was a full institutionalisation of French art, dependent upon collective interpretative acts on the part of the nation.

Given the unstable boundaries of the avant-garde, its variety of political affiliations, the tendency of some of its strands to reject explicitly modernist or progressive artistic practice, and the high profile pejorative use of the terms “ism” and “avant-gardism” in contemporary critical discourse and the popular press, it must be concluded that the avant-garde is something of a late twentieth century imposition. In discussing the avant-garde, or any one of its isms, it is important, therefore, to note that none of these metaphoric spaces of the “avant-garde” or “art” were stable, and that all partake of a porousness of boundaries. While it is possible to talk of the Right Bank, Orphism or the non-establishment press of the *petites revues*, today’s analyses meet the same complications, and freedoms, that greeted any attempted political interpretation of these concepts in pre-War France. Freedom comes from the potential of these terms to speak according to the project of the interpreter, precisely because of their complex or difficult nature, a freedom that much cubist art also offered.

However, the multiple fragments of all these concepts, and the multitude of aesthetic intentions and interpretative possibilities contained in cubist art, mean that neither the ism, the Right Bank, nor the *Portrait of Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler* are able to speak with a single, appropriated voice. The posthumous imposition of a truly consolidated avant-garde is an equivalent procedure in the present day to that enacted by pre-War political factions.

The avant-garde of the early twentieth century (since the term's functionality forbids its rejection), can be seen to partake of the paradox of liminality. Popular perception has it that the formation offers a cultural critique of contemporary French social life, a kind of resistance from a set point on France's ideological borders. Yet whilst the dominant ideology of the Third Republic enacted the distancing of avant-garde art and discourse in order to firm its own borders pre-1914, the formation also functioned to illuminate the nature of those borders as constructed, and as porous. The avant-garde's exposition of art as institution, discussed above, was one factor here. Yet this particular act remained largely within the concept of the avant-garde as distanced critic of centralised power. The avant-garde's most radical move was in fact to highlight the practices and processes of the dominant power, and to demonstrate the contested boundaries both of that power and of its own formation, by itself becoming implicated in the political economy of the Third Republic. It was a move not only driven by the volition of some fragments of the avant-garde, but often imposed upon the avant-garde *en masse* by the dominant power. This power repeatedly placed it in a liminal position, dragged it into contiguity with social modernity, grouped it into a false homogeneity, or exploded it into a myriad of fragmented and antagonistic counter-movements lacking power.

Pre-War, nationalism spread from its traditional home on the right, to gain precedence across the political spectrum, excluding the far left. The artistic efforts of the avant-garde, whether intended or imposed through politicised criticism and *réclame*, became a major indicator of this spread of nationalist sentiment. With international conflict imminent, and inter-class clashes a persistent threat due to the widening gap between a newly enriched bourgeoisie and a newly proletarianised working people, Solidarist and traditionalist voices began to dominate, even within the avant-garde. It could in fact be said that the issue of nationalism was the catalyst for the transition of the imposed function of the avant-garde from critical counter-current, to cultural reflector of trends in wider society. However, the avant-garde was also home to some of the most prominent resistance to the discourse of nationalism, as would be expected from a cosmopolitan milieu with a major immigrant and

exile population. The collapse of the *Bloc des Gauches* had also left many within the avant-garde disillusioned with party politics, and reluctant to conform to a political agenda. As was the case with the wider avant-garde of which it formed a part, cubism was split between pro-Republicans and nationalists, and anti-Republican and non-party political stances. However, all were in some form shaped by the dominant power. Cottington notes that cubism's history is as a result "fundamentally heteronymous, constructed across – and ultimately constrained by – the particular discourses which gave meaning to the experience of modernity in pre-war Paris" (6). The imposition of meaning by these various discourses could be said to be facilitated by cubism's offer of an apparently empty ideological container, ripe for appropriation. While far from the disengagement with society that its contemporary Aestheticist project proposed, cubism's often limited subject matter pre-1914, its even more limited palette and obscure internal references to its own plasticity contribute to a dangerous potential transition from the complex and unprecedented, towards an easy appropriation by political forces. Its indecipherability seemed to license a range of interpretations, over which the cubist artists themselves had limited control.

This appropriation of cubist art, and its surrounding avant-garde, is part of a broader co-option of the cultural life of France, increasingly yoked to nationalism. A major strand of this tendency is the work of the Third Republic to utilise French cultural heritage to ensure a cohesive national identity, in addition to the creation of an international market in distinctively French cultural products, to consolidate the country's primacy in the luxury goods market. This curatorship of French culture was two-pronged. The art of the past had to be marshalled into a cohesive history, and the prospect of this history as an ongoing teleology of progressive innovation required safeguarding through a policing of contemporary artistic developments. At all times the shadow of the country's burgeoning market economy followed these developments. The former project was in fact inherited from the late nineteenth century. 1881 had seen the liberation of the nation's salons from state control toward participation in the free market, with the establishment of the aforementioned national *Commission des Monuments Historiques* and the *Ministère des Beaux Arts* following in 1887. Art historical and museum curatorial studies also became well-established in the national universities. The art academies were no longer the single voice articulating the cultural standards of the nation. Instead, the institutionalisation of a national cultural practice had begun to embrace the market.

Tastes displayed in the salons did, however, largely follow those of the bourgeoisie who had the funds to buy, although the organisation of the salon cubists as a market force, their determination to be hung together as a movement, and the persistence of their presence in the salons from 1909-1914, began to bring change. In addition, by 1910 a major alternative to the salon was in place, with the establishment of numerous private dealerships, whose small clienteles tolerated the unusual, and were prepared to pay. Picasso and Braque's relationship with the dealer Kahnweiler kept the display of their art limited to his dealership, established in 1907, and the exhibitions he organised in various other European countries. A limited audience in contrast to the salon cubists, Kahnweiler's private market methods kept the two painters financially afloat, ultimately funding Picasso's transition out of Montmartre, and into an almost bourgeois existence. The importance of this new private market was indicated by Picasso's decision to immortalise two prominent private dealers in his portrait phase of 1910-1911: Ambroise Vollard, former dealer of Cézanne and purchaser of many of Picasso's early works, and Kahnweiler himself. Thus a bizarre conjunctural occurrence found the privatisation of the production and distribution of art works developing at the same historical moment as the nationalisation of French cultural heritage. This apparently paradoxical trend may perhaps be explained by the Third Republic's intentions of establishing French nationhood through economic progress and a significant profile on the world economic stage. It also placed a major pressure on both the political and aesthetic discourses of the time, in that art, freed from government control, had continuously to be recouped for the nationalist project. Further, French precedence in artistic innovation, and the subsequent boost to its cultural economy, had to stem from artistic revolutions that provided an ongoing stream of the new. There is therefore a surprising complicity between the anti-academicism of the avant-garde, and the cultural policies of the Third Republic.

Given that the avant-garde's position as counter-discourse to the political dominant is therefore questionable, and seems to exist even in the early twentieth century as merely a market-driven brand or empty signifier for various political ideologies, the avant-garde again has recourse to its concrete geographical position for any sense of stability. We are left with the single certainty that the avant-garde is Montmartre, although, like all other potential groundings for the concept, Montmartre began to refuse to be avant-garde. The private dealerships clustered in the area, catering for the *dénicheurs* such as Leo Stein and Wilhelm Uhde. Such *dénicheurs* mixed an interest in art with an economic drive, and made use of their instincts for the new to hunt out bargains, gambling on the subsequent fame of the painters. This new artistically and economically engaged geographical space of Montmartre

was thus poised somewhere between aesthetics and economics; a pre-industrialised community, feeling the forces of modernisation. It was literally framed by the comparative rurality of the fourteenth arrondissement, and the mass market spectacle of the nearby *Magasins Dufayel* department store. Cottington notes that although “still rural in character, it was both inside the city and yet separated from it by its steep slopes” (48). The combination of bohemian rural life and the rarefied air of aesthetic contemplation, coupled with proximity to the bourgeois city, proved a great attraction, ultimately ruining this separate space. As early as 1910, the area had become a commercialised bohemia, visited by tourists and the leisure classes of the bourgeoisie. Crowded with entertainment options, the entire area was increasingly at risk of a wholesale commodification.

The avant-garde was certainly aided and sustained by the artistic and intellectual congruences of a common geographical space. It also benefited from the possibility of a critical distance from the dominant ideology of the Third Republic. However, just as its geographical borders were increasingly open to extra-avant-garde traffic, so its dependence on the contemporary art market left its ideological borders open to political currents that included the dominant. The avant-garde and the Third Republic thus meet in a middle ground, through their mutual practice of yoking art to the market. When the issue of nationalism is in the ascendant pre-War, the art market issue becomes central, as the dominant power has recourse to an enforced institutionalisation and collective interpretation of national culture, while the avant-garde turns to the private dealerships to facilitate an aesthetic resistance to the dominant through plastic experimentalism. In this field of thought and practice, sliced through by nationalism to reveal a complex interrelationship between political and artistic factions as they work with the same cultural hardware, it can be difficult to ascertain true political affiliations and intentions. One way in which these can be untangled, is by looking at their treatment of the philosophical work of Bergson.

### **The New Geometries and the Fourth Dimension: Cubism and Science**

The observation of nationalism’s drift from the far right into the mainstream of French political culture must be qualified by an appreciation of the range of nationalisms current in pre-War France. On the far right, the *Action Française*, through its leading spokesman Maurras, advocated a royalist nationalism, believing that the future of the French nation could only be safeguarded once the structures of the state were in place. Another form of nationalism was, however, available: that of the writer Maurice Barrès. Barrèsian



nationalism was pro-Republic, and avoided the xenophobia and anti-semitism associated with Maurras. It was thus more palatable to a cosmopolitan avant-garde, and it is in the melding of salon cubism's aesthetic project and a form of philosophy widely taken to be congruent with Barrèsian nationalism that cubist art is first explicitly linked to a political stance. This philosophy was that of Bergson, who had achieved unprecedented academic celebrity after the publication of *L'Évolution Créatrice* (*Creative Evolution*) in 1907. His concepts of an *élan vital*, of *durée*, and of the importance of intuition were extremely useful to a nationalism founded on a social organicism, a connection of the present with past and future generations, and a response to art based on feeling and the unconscious. Despite Bergson's own fervent Republicanism, popularisations of his theory led to an almost cult-like interest in *Bergsonisme*, which was frequently co-opted by the mythic traditionalism of Barrèsian nationalism. In 1910, Allard chose to link Bergsonism with the efforts of the salon cubists, as outlined above, in an attempt to answer the critics and establish cubism as a nationalist and philosophically sensitive art. Via Barrèsian nationalism, salon cubism thus becomes implicated in classicism, as for Barrès, "nationalism is more than merely politics: it is a discipline [. . .]. Nationalism is a form of classicism; it is in every field the incarnation of French continuity" (qtd. in Cottington 59). This continuity extended back to the country's ancestors, and forward to future generations, all of which should be felt at the present moment, in a kind of large-scale historical appropriation of Bergson's *durée*.

Bergson's theories thus become popularised, his terms applied in ways that see them drop their philosophical specificity. They then, through a Bergsonism by now already distanced from his own original writings, become appropriated by an anti-Republican nationalism with which Bergson himself would be unable to identify. Finally, they are made to speak for a nationalist organicism and cultural teleology which Allard chooses to reference when attempting to instantiate salon cubism within a philosophical discourse that accommodates the concerns of a pre-War France. Another field in which the trajectory of appropriations can help to track the political engagement of the avant-garde is that of science. To an even greater extent than in the case of philosophy, the debatable political affiliations of the avant-garde can be seen to cluster around issues of contemporary science, and in particular around those of mathematical scientific conceptualisations of geometrical space, and, further, the field of physics. Timothy Mitchell has suggested that the work of contemporary scientists and philosophers formed a cultural atmosphere in which cubist art flourished, due to widespread discussion of such thought in journals of the day such as the *Mercur de France*. A review of journal literature, he claims, "reveals the existence of a

widely-discussed philosophy and scientific theory in Paris by 1910; the philosophy of Henri Bergson and the science of Gustav Le Bon. Available, intelligible, and contemporary, these popular theories constituted the intellectual atmosphere in which the new art suddenly flamed" (Mitchell 175).

Whatever appropriations the formal innovations of the cubists subsequently underwent, the pictorial spaces of the new art undoubtedly rejected the single ordering viewpoint of Renaissance perspectivism, and cubism can in this way be seen to be inherently interested in radical geometry. The rejection of old geometrical rules certainly liberated the plastic arts into a new era of experimentation. Yet it is difficult to establish the precise nature of the connection between cubist art and scientific thought, not least because of Picasso's reticence to explicate, or even acknowledge, a cubist movement, coupled with the willingness of others to explain cubist art in a way that artificially homogenised a diverse range of artistic experiments. Michael Whitworth has suggested that an analysis of common metaphors can highlight the relationship between early twentieth century art and scientific developments. He uses "the 'curvature' of Einstein's space" (5) as one such example. (Riemannian curved space would be a more familiar metaphor for the cubists, popularised via Henri Poincaré, a former tutor of Gleizes and Metzinger further discussed below.) Whilst Euclidean postulates demanded the imagination of infinity, they were grounded in a three dimensional mathematical space. When contradicted or, in Conventionalist terms, proved to be only one possible working geometry among many, the new postulates put in place asked the scientific community to imagine such things as curved space, atomic structure and a fourth dimension. In addition, an expanding group of interested non-scientists found it necessary to conjure with these terms, as their scientific understanding grew, mediated through prominent book and magazine popularisations. It is crucial to note that spatial or geometrical metaphors proliferated in a way that often saw them divorced from their original, particular scientific meaning. A popularised, amateur and inaccurate scientific discourse finds its way into many journalistic publications, as well as into the criticism of cubist art. A common metaphorical discourse, while foregrounding the art – science relationship, makes the specific contours of that relationship difficult to discern. Willard Bohn has pointed out that even an article by Apollinaire, produced for *Les Soirées de Paris*, and subsequently added to his *Les Peintres Cubistes* of 1913 in an edited form, had originally included an adamant assertion that the spheres of art and science were entirely separate in aims and practices (Bohn 10). This despite Apollinaire's key role in introducing scientific and allied philosophical principles into art criticism. Yet, as shall be seen, the

somewhat murky discursive and conceptual space cleared for both spheres by their new languages allowed a sometimes fruitful, often confusing and inaccurate cross-pollination of key terms from the field of science to that of art. Linda Dalrymple Henderson has claimed that while cubist experimentation deals with the notions of time and space, such experiments were not prompted by the work of Einstein, since wide-spread popularisation of his work was not part of French culture within the first two decades of the twentieth century. Instead, she suggests that the work of geometers of the fourth dimension and, secondarily, non-Euclidean geometers of the nineteenth century, are a more likely conceptual influence on these artists.

When, in 1931, Gleizes addressed the Polish *Grupa Sztuki Nowoczesne* on the subject of the interrelationship between art and science, he considered the subject to be a radical one. "The ARTS appear to be nothing more than pure fantasy," he claims, while "the SCIENCES have the reputation of being exactitude itself. So really, it is very daring to want to draw out the relations and connections that there might be between the two" ("Art and Science" 1). Yet the interrelationship between art and the discoveries of contemporary science had, by the time of Gleizes' address, a lengthy history behind it. It was, in fact, within the avant-garde, and particularly within Gleizes' own cubist milieu, that such a radical relationship between art and science was first established at a conceptual level, rather than at the level of narrative, subject matter or perspectival structure. Gleizes offers some explanation of how or why this cross-pollination may first have occurred when he states that "In science [. . .] everything is permitted. Constructions which, yesterday, were thought to be definitive are suddenly thrown over; the field has become no more than a demolition site" (2). This assertion of modern science's inherently revolutionary nature, suggests that culture by contrast tends to lag in a given historical period. The widespread negative response to cubist art had certainly indicated that changes in artistic norms were not welcomed across the nation. The resistance that greeted the overthrow of long-standing pictorial values and their replacement with new forms can perhaps be compared with the scientific field in considering the negativity that greeted the overthrow of Euclidean postulates in the geometrical revolutions begun in the nineteenth century.

As noted above, cubist apologist discourse made much of the contemporary underdevelopment of human perceptual faculties to explain the shock experienced when encountering the new art. Gleizes sees another parallel here between science and art, both dragging the contemporary mind along at their rapid pace of development, as new pictorial

forms and new scientific languages convey concepts for which the modern mind as yet lacks a capacity. The move beyond the conceptually familiar is, however, as essential for the field of art as for that of science, which “began by being descriptive in its observations, faithful to the image [. . .]. Then it wanted to enter into the very essence of what, previously, it had only described” (Gleizes, “Art and Science” 4). This transcendence of human capacities by the innovators of both fields seems both bold and admirable, but Gleizes goes on to state of science that “From observation at the level of Man it has gone to observation beyond the level of Man” (5). This movement beyond man seems to operate both in terms of a liberating transcendence of his current conceptual faculties, and in a transgression of borders into new metaphoric spaces of knowledge that he is unable to either physically experience or to comprehend, and in which he is therefore denied intervention.

In Gleizes’ paper, the recognition of important pioneering work is consistently tempered with a negative assessment of the distancing of the human subject from the reality outlined by new scientific formulations. It is in this way parallel to some of the negative criticism of cubist art that saw it as an elitist and hermetic undertaking designed to disenfranchise contemporary man from aesthetic experience. The notion of unexplored space runs throughout much late nineteenth and early twentieth century scientific discourse, which is itself ambivalent about the positive nature of these explorations. Those clinging to the certainties of Euclidean geometry and non-relative truth, the former under attack since the 1820s, were resistant to unknowable spaces that, even if grasped conceptually, could not be experienced by the sensory faculties. However, scientific developments that sought to dismantle Euclidean truths and suggest alternative geometries and mathematical spaces often couched their discourse in terms that suggest the exploration of new realms. This discourse comes, in fact, to sound something like that of the Enlightenment, although crucially it lacks the underlying anchoring of a humanist teleology and the possibility of a stable truth.

The instability of all values implied by the rejection of Euclidean postulates is the source of the fears experienced by contemporary man as he contemplates the new spaces of knowledge conveyed through new pictorial forms, and new scientific language. Gleizes asks his audience, “If it were possible to hold scientific exhibitions in which were shown, side by side and clearly expressed [. . .] the many different modern scientific theories, what would the public do before such works and how would they react? By what criteria would they judge what they see?” (6). This unusual image throws up two key issues in the consideration of relationships between cubist art and scientific discourse: the dismantling of the possibility

of judgement according to a template of normative values and, obliquely referenced here, the plausibility of a claim that cubist art attempted nothing more than an illustration of contemporary scientific theories. When the public objects to the innovations of contemporary painting, when such painting fails to be “a representation of external appearances,” then that public is “defending its sense of the hierarchy of values, which is that of Man” (6). When the concepts required for a full understanding of the current form of both art and science moved beyond those explicated by human experience or perception, then realms of hidden space are entered, a journey which the public finds frightening because unprecedented.

In looking back over the interrelationship of science and art in the first thirty years of the twentieth century, Gleizes finds a variety of scientific concepts that, through a common cultural mediation, come to fascinate artists of the avant-garde. The processes of this mediation include an increasing commonality in language, the mixing of thinkers from both fields in the social spaces of the avant-garde itself, and popularisations of leading scientific thought. In the sphere of the mathematical sciences, Poincaré was to have a significant influence on the cubists, and most particularly on the Cubism manifesto. Poincaré’s key innovation was to distinguish between tactile, motor and visual space, a framework that enabled the manifesto’s authors to claim that cubism’s successive perspectives could be seen to portray motor space on a static canvas. Poincaré’s texts became increasingly popular between 1900 and 1910, including most famously *La Science et l’hypothèse* (*Science and Hypothesis*) in 1903. In this text, the author introduces the geometry of Riemann (fig. 4), which suggests that local curvatures of space mean that Euclid’s parallel postulate no longer holds good. This postulate had stated that two parallel lines extending in space will not touch at any point in projected time and space, and will remain parallel to infinity. This colonisation of eternity with a stable and predictable spatial structure was the core of Euclid’s dogmatism, from which Riemann, and Poincaré, were trying to escape. Cubism demonstrates the authors’ familiarity with the latter’s work, when it puts forward the statement that “if we wished to tie the painter’s space to a particular geometry [. . .] we should have to study, at some length, certain of Rieman’s [sic] theorems” (8). Poincaré was also the most high profile proponent of Conventionalism in the early part of the century, essentially linking geometry to the relativist current in contemporary thought, by suggesting, in anticipation of Gleizes’ comments in 1931, that whilst Euclidean theory has a significant utility, it cannot be said to be true. For the Conventionalists, various new geometrical formulations were of equal validity, dependent only on their facility at a given time. In 1891,



Poincaré stated that “*the axioms of geometry* [. . .] are *conventions*; our choice among all the possible conventions is *guided* by experimental facts; but it remains *free* and is limited only by the necessity of avoiding all contradiction” (qtd. in Henderson 97). This was a radical step for a society still untangling itself from the belief that mathematics is a pure form of truth, built on absolutes. Poincaré came to view the relative geometries of Conventionalist understanding as psycho-social manifestations, rather than reflections of truth merely realised with varying degrees of accuracy. Mitchell notes of Poincaré that “Concomitant to his explanation of hypotheses as necessary conveniences was the recognition that such hypotheses did not represent final truths” (176).

However, intersecting the scientific developments of the period is a current of philosophical thought that, in its implications for the treatment of space and time, also held a strong fascination for the art world. Most prominent was the work of Bergson. As discussed above, popularisations of Bergson, in the form of an *en vogue* Bergsonism made great use of the *élan vital* concept to strengthen an organicist view of the French nation. Bergson also considered the human experience of time, and the temporality of biological evolution that was resistant to the segmentation of time. He also freed space from Newtonian absolutes, asserting the impossibility of the segmented measurement of space. His establishment of the importance of *durée* can be seen to stem from his understanding of the formation of the human intellect as a product of a “creative” human evolution. This intellect cannot, as such, be considered to be a value-neutral perceptual faculty. Relinquishing a reliance on the fallible intellect, man must rely on an empathetic form of consciousness. The melded temporalities of *durée*, together with the importance of an understanding that relies on empathy more than rationality, made Bergson an appealing prospect for writers seeking to explicate cubism by centring the work on the creative genius of the artist. However, given the right wing nationalist associations of popularised Bergsonism, appropriations of his theory could lead such writers into murky waters, misrepresenting the political stances of the artists on whose behalf they purported to speak.

Bergson’s thought also made an important contribution to one of the central spatial figures of the common culture of art and science in this period: the fourth dimension. Mitchell claims, in fact, that “It was in the fourth dimension that art and science first made contact” (176) a claim that itself invests in the notion of the fourth dimension as semi-metaphoric and semi-inhabitable. Theories of the fourth dimension had been linked to cubism since 1911 when Apollinaire, a major importer of discourse from extra-aesthetic

disciplines, had used the term in his speech for the *Exposition d'Art Contemporain* (Weiss 81). Popularised understanding had it that the fourth dimension stemmed from the three already familiar to man through experience, and was dragged into being by the addition of time, to create a space-time that existed in four dimensions, and was therefore beyond the experiential capacities of the human. However, in *Duration and Simultaneity*, Bergson contends that “what has not been sufficiently noted is that a fourth dimension of space is suggested by every spatialization of time; it has therefore always been implicit in our science and language” (*Duration* 103). He explains that this spatialisation is implicit in the work of the modern mathematician, for “the mathematician’s time is necessarily a time that is measured, and therefore, a spatialized time” (*Duration* 105). Further, the need for a transition into the fourth dimension is essential, because “what is given as motion in a space of any number of dimensions can be represented as form in a space of one more dimension” (*Duration* 106). The transition into a dimension that exceeds human sensory experience made popularisations problematic for contemporary discourse, and led to innovative, although not always accurate, expressions of four dimensional theory.

The fourth dimension was, for the early twentieth century, a confusing space. Outlined by mathematicians and geometers, seen as an outcrop of space-time, or as an inevitable by-product of time’s ongoing scientific spatialisation, the dimension made the journey from the scientific to the philosophical through the work of Bergson. It was not to stop there, however. Through popularisations, misunderstandings, and appropriations in art critical discourse, the space became metaphysical, and even theosophical. By creating a space beyond the experience of man and his current faculties, science had shunted the fourth dimension into an imaginative realm that, while it represented for some scientists a disempowering distance from reality, also gave the artistic field a metaphoric space of freedom to which to allude. This figuring of the fourth dimension has great resonance in a period when the concrete geographic space of the avant-garde in Montmartre is under threat from the tourist industry. The plastic interpretation of the fourth dimension occurred most famously in two key articles. Max Weber, writing in 1910 in the experimental art magazine *Camera Work*, suggested that “in plastic art [. . .] there is a fourth dimension [which] is brought into existence through the three known measurements. It is not a physical entity or a mathematical hypothesis [. . .] it is the immensity of all things’ (Weber 25). This pantheistic embrace of the fourth dimension, which “envelopes a tree, a mountain, or any solid” (25), is echoed by Apollinaire in 1913’s *The Cubist Painters* when he states that “the Fourth Dimension appears to spring from the three known dimensions: it represents the immensity

of space externalizing itself in all directions at any given moment. It is space itself, the dimension of the infinite" (Apollinaire 116). Again, the spectrum of the fourth dimension's embrace is broad, and Apollinaire tellingly reclaims the infinite from Euclid's parallel postulate. However, the lure of the fourth dimension in the writing of Apollinaire and Weber is indicative of its potential as an imaginative space whose existence stems from human experience of the three knowable dimensions, but is unconfined by the rigours of geometry.

The fourth dimension in the early twentieth century is thus explicated by two strains of thought. The first is the geometrically inflected fourth dimension, which can be mathematically calculated from the other three dimensions, takes man beyond his existent perceptual faculties, and is an escape from classical geometrical formulations and the certainties of Euclid. It is also, in some conceptions, generated from the fusion of space and time. In the second strain, a transition out of the scientific or mathematical sphere takes the fourth dimension into the function of a spiritual space, linked to private experience, the unconscious and the pastoral. Art historian Meyer Schapiro suggests that cubist art bears no relation to the new sciences, but conceives of a fourth dimension of the second strain, which he sees as stemming back to the metaphysics of the seventeenth century. Such a metaphysics perceives the fourth dimension as the dwelling place of the spirits. He therefore states that "in Cubist painting there is no attempt at simulation of physics, no influence of modern mathematics" (Schapiro 21). Schapiro's well-received analysis should be challenged, as he fails to note that the popularisation of scientific discourse, and its wide currency in the critical press surrounding cubism, allows this spiritual interpretation of the fourth dimension to co-exist as a second strain *belonging to* new scientific understanding, rather than to the metaphysical developments of centuries past.

These two strains of interpretation acting on the conceptual space of the fourth dimension, which may be termed the geometrical and the spiritual, coexist because both the metaphysical and the mathematical fields require man to employ imaginative faculties in thinking about this fourth space which is beyond experience. The two strains become mixed because the fourth dimension has a broad cultural valency, and has been liberated into the discourse of France's educated classes through science fiction, art critical texts, the national press, high profile academicians such as Bergson, and, increasingly, popularisations of scientific theories. One of the most widely read popularisations, which ultimately encouraged its readers to concede to the possibility of the fourth dimension, was Edwin A. Abbott's Flatland: A Romance of Many Dimensions, published in 1884. The text asked the

reader to imagine a two dimensional space, the Flatland, populated by two-dimensional figures, and to consider the perceptions of these inhabitants if a three-dimensional sphere was to fall through their world. While the author primarily intended the text as an illustration of the function of gravitation as a distortion of space-time, the experience of the Flatlanders suggested that the appearance of another dimension was possible, and that a questioning of the previously known and stable world, and of the self, would result. The Flatlanders gained a currency in popular scientific texts, and became a central illustration of the fear and possibility invoked by the fourth dimension.

Art, then, begins its dialogue with the spaces suggested by contemporary science early in the twentieth century, although it draws both on thinking from its own historical moment such as that of Poincaré and Minkowski, and on the long-running discourse of the non-Euclidean geometries, begun in the 1820s. This dialogue has often been confused with a direct traffic between scientific thought and attempts to pictorially illustrate contemporary perceptions of space. Looking for geometrical analysis in cubist art that corresponds to the latest scientific thinking on the subject is, however, a fruitless task, and reduces cubist art to the status of mere diagrammatic exercise. In fact, direct contact between artists and the latest ideas of science and philosophy was not necessary for such ideas to find themselves transposed into the painterly realm in some way. As Mitchell has it: "To demonstrate a connection between Bergson's philosophy and the young avant-garde artists need not require proof of their first-hand knowledge. In the period [. . .] Bergson's popularity was immense [. . .]. The literary periodicals frequently contained reviews of his works, as well as articles in which his ideas were fully described and discussed" (177). A mediation occurs between the fields of art and science, a cultural conjuncture in which their interrelationship may be reduced to a correspondence of metaphors, and a mutual rejection of the norms of the past. This common culture is, in the first two decades of the twentieth century, primarily structured around metaphors of space. While the scientific field offers mathematical reconsiderations of spatial relationships, and the artistic field offers radical approaches to pictorial space and form, these poles are linked by conceptions of space that move freely between the two fields, and illuminate the conjoined nature of the common culture. These conceptions include the notion of curved space and the fourth dimension.

Gleizes appears to concur with the concept of a common culture when he states that "To the changes which we may remark in the field of the sciences, identical changes correspond in the field of the arts. And why should it be otherwise? [. . .] the disturbances

they both undergo change them both, the one just like the other" ("Art and Science" 12). Changes in conceptions of space, frequently tied to those of time, and hence to the experience of movement, were thus able to revolutionise the fields of both science and art. Gleizes explicitly dates these revolutions just prior to the formulation of a nascent cubism on the part of Braque, stating that they "have shaken and overturned from top to bottom the habits of the sciences and of the arts, comfortably settled as they both were in principles which they thought were definitive" (12). Cubism leads the way in tearing such principles apart, and is as such "the bearer of a sure and certain future based on the complete renunciation of everything to do with the position of an observer who looks at a world which he considers to be pre-existent and external to himself" (36). Instead, cubism "affirms [. . .] the adoption of principles through which painting can become in its own nature a builder of the human world" (36). Both art and science thus felt a liberation when freed from the dogmatism of a space ordered according to Euclidean postulates. For Gleizes, this freedom enabled art to establish its own laws, but this very possibility was driven by the freedom felt in the scientific world to work, not without standardised laws of geometry, but with a variety of new spatial conceptions. Such freedom is balanced with the fear felt when, as with the public at the scientific gallery described above, science strays beyond the faculties and experiences of man. Gleizes states of modern science that "we have taken to running after the infinitely small and the infinitely great" (42), indicating that man loses his sense of self, or his capacity to experience, when he is taken away from spaces *of his own order*, despite the fact that these spaces offer new realms of knowledge. This problem is further echoed in the paradox of the fourth dimension, which at once offers freedom from norms, and a lack of potential for agency, given its operation in the register of the imaginary, being beyond the sensory perceptions of the human body. There is perhaps a further echo here in the form of the avant-garde's metaphoric ideological space, whose distance from wider social structures at once offers freedom, and removes the capacity to effect social, political, or epistemological change.

The "small" and "great" spaces to which Gleizes refers would seem to be those of atomic structure, and the operations of gravity on the planets. This supposition is perhaps further underlined later in the paper, when, in a discussion on monocularity, he mentions the microscope and the telescope. For Gleizes, atomic structure is a prime instance in which the limitations of the human eye, of its sensory faculties, are demonstrated. "The eye finishes by reaching a level which is at the extreme limit of its capacities," he states, "That is the anguish of the scientist before the mystery of the atom" (52). Gleizes then proceeds to



explain, via what seems to be an appropriation of Werner Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle that, freed from Euclidean postulates, the electron vanishes in an attempt to conjoin the spatial and the temporal. Thus while the proton at the centre of the atom is "logical, classical, Euclidean," the electrons by contrast side with contemporary science in that they "have no respect for ancient customs, still less for our habits of mind" (52). This disrespect for pre-established norms makes the movement of the electrons an impossible subject for analysis, for "If you can locate the electron, you cannot measure its impetus [. . .]. If you consider its impetus, you can no longer tell where it is in space [. . .] it has disappeared" (52). A conjunction of temporality and spatiality, a crucial factor in many understandings of the geometrical fourth dimension, takes the object of scientific study beyond the capacities of the human mind.

Gustav Le Bon was a physicist widely discussed at the time of the cubists who had made a particular study of the structure of the electron. Mitchell has suggested that his work on the nature of matter makes Le Bon the most obvious scientific counterpart to the philosophical work of Bergson (177). Mitchell reports that such a correspondence was noted in the journals of the time, most coherently in Jean Blum's article "Le Philosophie de M. Bergson et La Poésie Symboliste," published in the *Mercure de France* in 1906 (qtd. in Mitchell 179). Mitchell therefore concludes that "By 1910 Parisian intellectuals were thus confronted by two of the principal conceptual changes which revolutionized science; the unification of matter and energy [in Le Bon], and the interaction of space and time [in Bergson]" (179).

Continuing his concern with atomic structure, Gleizes goes on to establish a peculiar and ambitious conflation between the anguished scientist and his disappearing electrons, and the urbanisation of the West into patterns of city structure that resemble that of the atom. He claims, ultimately, that atomic spatialisation is at the heart of the problems of the twentieth century. The claim itself is never fully realised, although the way in which Gleizes sees the atomic metaphor operating reflects the central position of the broader space metaphor that seems to underpin many of the cultural, scientific and social changes of the period. Atomic structure, states Gleizes, "is what we may call the generalised tragedy of our time, since what occurs in these high intellectual regions occurs equally at all other levels all along the line to the organisation of the social web" (52). Gleizes concludes with the observation that "the arts and the sciences are two complementarities," which will be unable to perform their separate functions in human social life "so long as they remain mutually ignorant and

isolated one from the other” (59). By operating in isolation, either sphere would obscure information that would put its findings into a more accurate relative position. An art or science left to operate alone would only, Gleizes seems to suggest, arrive at further structures of thought that, like Euclid’s, have a practical value, but cannot be said to be “true.” If space, as section one of this chapter suggested, can be understood as a structuring metaphor for many of the discourses of life in the modernist period, then it is the release from an exclusive attachment to the field of science – through new scientific language, processes of popularisation, and a shift in tenor to imaginative spaces – that has enabled space as metaphor to operate at a deep structural level in the common culture.

Assessing the influence of contemporary scientific theory on the work of the cubists, Schapiro suggests that the interior spaces of the café scenes by 1912 chosen increasingly as cubist subject matter, cannot bear any relation to issues of space-time as they would be unaffected by its metric of 186,000 miles per second (55). He uses the hermeticism of cubist work to suggest that contemporary science remained an irrelevancy, and to support his contention that the cubists in fact owe more to seventeenth century physics than to the work of Bergson and Poincaré. Schapiro makes a mistake often repeated in critical histories of cubist art: he looks at the works as if they should merely illustrate contemporary theory. However, as observed above, this approach reduces the function of cubist art to diagrammatic representation, and obscures the fact that at a less direct but equally significant level, cubist artists were engaging with scientific thought. Rather than painting objects perceived to be affected by the forces of relativity, or imbued with a geometrical fourth dimension, these artists were painting to question artistic norms dislodged by contemporary scientific and philosophical thinking that ruined such a direct relationship between fact and appearance. Far from seeking to paint science, changes in painterly practice in the cubist period stem from changing conceptions of plastic space and form that are mediated through a French society concerned with rethinking time, space, space-time, motion, selfhood, reality and the relative nature of truth. Artistic experimentation and scientific exploration meet in this common society, and their new ways of seeing are structured at a fundamental level by the space metaphor.

Cubist art offers a meaningful introduction to the role played by space in the cultural output of the modernist period, since it intervenes in and explores spaces within a metaphoric and concrete register and, further, shows how social space is produced through the interaction of these two registers. The concept of space, released from an exclusive

attachment to geometrical science, comes under cubist scrutiny on a metaphoric level. As a consequence, cubist artists challenge the artistic conventions of preceding epochs, questioning the nature of art and its role in society. Such questioning, at a crucial moment within the rule of the Third Republic, has repercussions for the geographical and metaphoric/ideological space of France as a nation. These radical questions are asked in the first instance from a geographically, if not conceptually or politically, coherent position in Montmartre. As a result of these debates regarding art and space, the art works produced by cubist artists, and in particular those by Picasso and Braque, are themselves concerned with space and perception. Their concrete form and metaphoric content are, in parallel to modernist literary texts, transformed by a concern with spatiality. While the avant-garde's radicalism might lead critics to think of it as so antagonistic as to be beyond the reach of the market economy, the commercial elements of cubist art and its promotional practices demonstrate that this is not the case. Economics play a vital role in reshaping the concrete and metaphoric spaces associated with cubist art. This space – economics connection is most conspicuous in the *papiers collés* works of Picasso and Braque, as the next chapter seeks to explore. It is, ultimately, this connection that enables the innovations of cubist art to be seen in parallel to modernist literary practice.

## Chapter Three

### Newspapers

#### The Cubism Connection

In the autumn of 1912 Picasso and Braque undertook an intensive exploration of their new process of *papiers collés*. Subsequent art historical analysis has interpreted their efforts as a radical application of fragments of reality to the sacrosanct canvas of high art. Yet this interpretation distracts the viewer from an appreciation of more complex operations under way in these works. It is reasonable to interpret this pasted paper art as primarily interrogative of the nature of reality, rather than operating merely as a series of instances in which the hermetic seal of the canvas is broken by the importation of fragments of a stable reality beyond its bounds. However, there are several inter-linked secondary results of these explorations in pasting, centred upon the transgression of cultural norms distinguishing high and low forms. By adding song sheets, music hall programmes, bottle labels, advertisements and newspaper clippings to their works, Picasso and Braque question the notion of high, genius-forged artworks. By bringing their work not so much into contiguity, but into co-contamination, with the commercial materials of contemporary Paris, the artists focus attention upon the assumptions and expectations that contribute to the formation of a high art. By choosing to do so at a moment when cultural anxieties were rife, due to the Third Republic's yoking of art to a sense of national identity, Picasso and Braque generate a broadly politically unsettling set of artistic practices, elitist as their contemporary audience might be.

The *papiers collés* questioned, in effect, the coherence of a teleological narrative of cultural history, by suggesting the ruination of the possibility of bequeathing French art to subsequent generations. This occurred through the use of pasted materials of a perishable nature, which in turn made a culturally radical suggestion: that French art, at the very moment of the Third Republic's need to stabilise a national identity by linking past, present and future, in fact had a shelf-life. Further, the pasted paper works partook of the implications of the display-shelf, via their use of the various apparatuses of advertising, making the link between artistic endeavour and pecuniary gain explicit. It is the latter connection to commerce that is crucial for a real understanding of these works. One particular form of pasted paper fragment does much to draw out the role of economics in the ordering of the *papiers collés*' visual display. It is a form

which also operates as a dense nexus of conceptual, linguistic and spatial issues: the newspaper. The effects of the commercialised newspaper text, in the context of high modernist forms, both plastic and literary, are the subject of this chapter. The publications used in the *papiers collés* cover a range of political affiliations: *L'Indépendent*, *Le Figaro*, *L'Intransigeant* and, most frequently, *Le Journal*. Patricia Leighton has noted that of the eighty collages created between 1912 and 1913 and attributable to Picasso, fifty-two contained some element of newsprint (Leighton 153). This frequency suggests an obsessional artistic interest on Picasso's part, as well as reflecting the ease with which newspaper scraps could be found. The very process of *papiers collés* construction gestures towards the newspaper, as it operates through a process of juxtaposition, a key feature of newspaper design. Newspaper therefore functions not only as a locus of philosophical and artistic questions within the *papiers collés* body of work, but also as a structural paradigm offering distinctive visual configurations to individual pasted works. Throughout these works, as in modernist novels, the newspaper retains this dual impact: a peculiar visual appearance, and a certain conceptual shift that recalls the commercial in a high art context. In the modernist period, the newspaper, the *papiers collés* work and the avant-garde novel all undergo concrete spatial transformation in terms of form and lay-out, as well as metaphoric spatial transformation in a multitude of ways discussed below.

The newspaper's status as a commodity form is explicit. Pertaining largely to the day on which it is distributed, the information it contains quickly becomes obsolete. The newspaper's function as a form depends on its ability to represent in some way the day of its distribution. This limited shelf life results in the use of paper of comparatively poor quality, prone to fading, strange colouration and decay; its physical form suits its purpose. However, this temporality of rapid decay was, at the time of the cubists, at odds with the expectations of high art. The unusual colouration, or what Anne Baldassari has referred to as "chromatic specificity" (21), resulting from the pasting of what was essentially "old news" would have attracted the pasted paper artists, but horrified the Third Republic, for whom an eternal French art was an essential cultural endeavour. In an echo of the shape of the constantly revolutionising demand for commodities in the capitalist economic system, the newspaper depends upon a consistently renewed demand for information from its readers. Its own physical circulation through processes of distribution traces the ebbs and flows of this demand. Again, to find this capacity for obsolescence in a high art context such as the *papiers collés* work was, at this time, startling.



The appearance of the newspaper fragment in the art of Picasso and Braque, then, plays a vital role in prompting a consideration of the direction of traffic between high and low art. The artists make the playful suggestion that the newspaper should be considered as a high form, a suggestion bound to upset those whose political affiliations led them to protect a French art untainted by the mass cultural, and transcendent of its day. More radically, both artists were aiming to engage with the notion that all art partakes of the commercial, can be produced with scant regard for the expression of personal genius, and can ultimately be exchanged for payment, and thus equated with a monetary value. In any case, the implication of art *as commodity* is inherent in the more explicit suggestion of commodity *as art*. While any artist dependent upon the sale of their work for their own subsistence cannot ignore the pecuniary element of artistic production, this playful foregrounding of the commercial was unprecedented in avant-garde artistic practice. From the autumn of 1912 onwards, Picasso and Braque established an interaction between the *papiers collés* work, the newspaper form, and the concept of commodity status. It is the newspaper that is the vital element in setting this interaction in motion, used by the artists as a touch-paper to ignite unsettling debates around the place of art in an increasingly commerce-focused and culturally anxious society.

### **Pasted Newspapers**

The newspaper's broader function in the France of 1912 was manifold. Not only did newspapers convey recent social, political and economic events, but they also provided entertaining fictional writing, offered advice, acted as guides to urban pursuits and leisure time, and printed the thoughts of their readers in the form of letters. By the period in which Picasso and Braque were exploring the possibilities of pasted paper, the newspaper also contained increasingly innovative and eye-catching advertisements for other commercial products, as the advertising industry sought to make best use of this opportunity to reach a mass audience. The newspaper of the early twentieth century may thus be considered as at once a guide to the commercialised city, and an active participant in the flows of its economy. While newspaper use can be seen simply as part of an ongoing search by the artists for sources of visual texture, an understanding that puts newspaper on a par with the patterning of wallpaper or simulated woodgrain, the consistent use of newspaper implies a more complex engagement, one that draws out the commercial, itself a factor in the use of the other materials mentioned. The presence of newspaper fragments in the *papiers collés* is consistent enough to suggest that newsprint was specifically selected as a

material, a selection that itself indicates the centrality of debates around contemporary commercialism and mass culture. Newspaper brings with it, then, contemporary anxieties regarding the developing capitalist economy, anxieties that may be all the more understandable if the newspaper's own, newly ad-ridden lay-out is understood as a visual registering of the incursion of the commercial into the journalistic sphere.

However, once displaced from its original function and paper context and replaced in a pasted work, the newspaper fragment does not only drag in concepts and anxieties around its form and the wider commercial culture which that form can be seen to represent. The fragment also reiterates something of its original function: it continues to exist as a legible and potentially informative, although now outdated, instance of writing. In addition to visual consumption in terms of texture, light and shade, the fragment begs the viewer to engage in a reading process. These two modes of visual engagement with the work, the textural and the readerly, are held in tension in the viewing experience. In a work of November 1912 entitled *Glass and Bottle of Suze* (fig.5), Picasso makes use of several fragments in which he has been careful to retain legibility. This intentional use of the possibilities of the fragments as readable items is confirmed by the interrelation of the juxtaposed stories. In fact, the selection process is so clearly deliberate that it may be more accurate to call the newspaper materials "clippings" rather than merely fragments, in order to underscore the purposeful selection and careful cutting of the material. The clippings include a report of the Serbian troops' advance towards Macedonia, a gruesome eyewitness account of the wounded and diseased, and details of a joint rally between socialists, anarchists and pacifists. According to Leighton, of the newspaper clippings used in Picasso's pasted paper works created between 1912 and 1914, more than half contained war reports or related material, with a further quarter containing references to the wider collapse of civil society in reports on suicide, murder and vandalism (122). Attention must also be drawn to the original colour economy of the work, which references the red, white and blue of the Tricolor. Given the commercial and perishable materials used to construct this work, the Tricolor, ultimate symbol of the enduring French nation, will in fact decay over time. In view of this juxtaposition of elements, it becomes increasingly difficult *not* to ascribe a political intention to Picasso's work.

The formal rupture of the insertion of mass cultural artifacts such as the newspaper has particular political ramifications in a period of acute cultural uncertainty. The content of the clippings, deliberately selected and pasted according to visual and political economies, grants

Picasso a space-within-a-space in which to make essentially party political statements, whilst rigorously avoiding the attachment of the experimental thrust of his formal innovations to any explicitly political endeavour. During the period of *papiers collés* exploration, essentially on the eve of war, the government of the Third Republic remained keen to appropriate artistic output as a primary means of disseminating a sense of French national identity. Subsequent to the enforced secession of Alsace-Lorraine, and prior to the First World War, France had been crucially concerned with the space of the nation and its geographical borders. Artistic space, typically that of the canvas (due to its academic associations) had become, in a conceptual sense, the space of the French nation. Consequently, an invasion of that space by foreign (pasted) bodies will be troubling, in that it prefigures a disintegration of the borders of the French nation at the hands of foreign powers. This transgression of the canvas/nation space by the mass cultural materials of newsprint, posters, and advertisements is particularly troubling because, while they can be considered foreign elements in formal terms, they are in another sense a homegrown enemy. This homegrown threat of the commercial is symbolic of the French nation's own drive to modernisation and an advanced stage of economic development, an integral part of its self-promotion on the international stage.

Picasso's labours in this political context begin to look something like those of an editor, as he makes use of the juxtaposition of news items. Rosalind E. Krauss has claimed that "the technique of making collage, with its bits and pieces that can be shifted about [ . . . ] is derived from commercial practice. It is more reminiscent of layout design than of anything taught at the Ecole des Beaux Arts" (Krauss 71). Krauss thus demonstrates that the labour of juxtaposition, and its resultant visual economy, is primarily a commercial affair. However, her statement also sheds some light on the nature of editorship itself, identifying it as an ideologically inflected endeavour dependent, like Picasso's own, upon careful selection and cutting. The artist cannot have been unaware of this political potential of the editorial role, given his obvious interest in newsprint, and his residence in a country where, in the pre-war period, the press was becoming increasingly explicitly censored. Further, the editor – artist parallel may be considered alongside the viewer – reader parallel. When looking at *Glass and Bottle of Suze* the viewer reads in an associational manner governed by spatial logic, personal interest or whim, ways of reading that would have been familiar to any contemporary newspaper consumer.

Fragments of newspaper or advertisement materials are, of course, the product of other creators. Here, in the context of the pasted paper work, such creators are anonymous, and so the fragments come to disrupt the equation between high art and the expression of personal genius. In fact, this editorship of the pasted paper work, which operates somewhere between anonymity and collective speech, characterises the discourse of both the newspaper and the advertisement. In creating his work, Picasso adopts an editorial role, speaking only through a process of selection and juxtaposition. His expression therefore occurs in the relationships generated by the cumulative effects of borrowed signs. In this way, Picasso's colonisation of other cultural registers and practices results in the breakdown of a single artistic voice, via fragmentation, selective appropriation and juxtaposition. The question arises of just where this colonising power lies. Does it lie with Picasso, selecting a pot-pourri of commercial materials from his immediate Parisian environment? Or do the commercial materials themselves colonise the artwork? The broader drama is the inevitable colonisation of art by contemporary commercial forces, a drama enacted by the individual works. This colonisation seems not to be lamented in the art of either Picasso or Braque; rather, the playful aspects to many of the works indicate an enthusiasm around the chafing of signifiatory systems. In the case of the *papiers collés* this project comes to the fore, as the viewer is asked to confront and engage in processes of deciphering, reading, active participation and the assessment of relational meaning between fragments. Perhaps in this way the reading of the newspaper clippings, prompted by their legibility, is an indicator of the labour necessary for a full engagement with the work as a whole.

The newspaper is marked by an ability to expertly colonise space via efficient systems of production, distribution and sale, by a portability, an economy of visual display using eye-arresting techniques of juxtaposition, an explicit connection to the fast pace and manifold opportunities of the contemporary urban milieu, and an ephemerality in which it is constantly reinvented for the day of distribution. These features make it a viable habitat for another form in which language and the commercial interact: that of advertising. The appearance of graphically innovative advertising in newspapers as a major presence was a relatively new phenomenon in the early twentieth century, not only revolutionising lay-out design but also funding the wider distribution of newspapers which in turn broadened the reach of the carried ads themselves. The particular ramifications of the appearance of the newspaper in the pasted paper works must be understood in the context of the use of other forms of writing: posters, labels, theatre programmes, menus, songsheets and advertisements. Linking all of these instances of writing is

a relation to commodities. Whilst songsheets and theatre programmes are themselves saleable items, the other written elements listed refer to products beyond themselves which are for sale. However, by making the transition into the sphere of the *papiers collés*, the newspaper establishes a distinct relation between writing and commodities, one which sets it apart from these other instances of commercial writing. The function of the newspaper in the pasted paper work is Janus-faced. It at once aids Picasso and Braque in a consideration of the signifiatory systems of painting, and instantiates itself in a forum in which its power to transform *language itself* into a commodity is highlighted. Far from seeing this commercially-inflected language as problematic, it may be claimed that Picasso sought to suggest both the arbitrary nature of all sign systems, and the economic impulse at the heart of all attempts at signification in the twentieth century. By adding economic language into the linguistic or signifiatory economy of his pasted works, Picasso demonstrates a problematic or disruptive commercialism inherent to any attempt at signification.

Newspapers and advertisement materials were, then, pasted to *papiers collés* works with a broadly four-fold purpose. Most explicitly, to operate as legible traces of a commercial economy. In addition, to import explicitly political and social commentary into the ostensibly aesthetics-focused work of high abstract art. Also, to play with systems of signification and their relation to reality. Finally, to imply the inevitability of commodity status for the work as a contemporary cultural artifact. Given this conceptual volatility of both the newspaper and the advertisement, it is reasonable to suggest that they will generate similarly interesting debates as they circulate amongst other art forms. In literature, as in the pasted paper works, newspapers and ads appear and undertake, in various contexts, one or more of a connected set of operations. Sometimes they are included in a way that seems merely to operate as an appropriate representation of an aspect of contemporary life, an attempt at mere verisimilitude. Elsewhere, the newspaper form lends to literature its structural principle of juxtaposition, or its typographical and linguistic peculiarities. Here, perhaps, the reflection of a contemporary reality moves towards a radical conceptual shift related to that perceived by the dominant powers of France: what can this contamination by the principles of the press mean for a high art form? This conceptual shift is further fuelled by the operation, in this literary context as in the plastic, of the newspaper as the vector of a set of new and startling economic principles.



Such operations of the newspaper form have a complex relationship to concrete and metaphoric spaces. The newspaper reflects the social space of the contemporary urban realm, recording the interaction between concrete and metaphoric or imaginative space in the city. Its own concrete space in terms of lay-out is radically altered in an effort to adequately capture this social space, as well as to intervene in it. When transposed to the sphere of art or avant-garde literary practice, the newspaper will affect the concrete spaces of these other forms, but, crucially, it also transforms the metaphoric spaces at work in the *papiers collés* or the modernist novel. Such metaphoric spatial transformation is often connected to the commercial, another primary driving force in the urban realm, and in changes to the concrete space of newspaper lay-out through the medium of the advertisement. Moving from the France of the cubists across the channel to modernist Britain, anxiety and fascination around the influence of the newspaper can be perceived. The French Third Republic were concerned with the commercial, decaying materiality of the newspaper, and with the impact of this upon the canvas of high art on both a physical and conceptual level. Picasso and Braque engaged with such an anxiety intentionally and confrontationally. Writers of the British avant-garde make a parallel use of newsprint, allowing a quotidian form into the pages of their high, experimental literature. While some writers stop at dramatising the central role of newspaper in contemporary urban life, others allow the status of their own texts to be re-shaped and reassessed from within as a result of the visual forms, textual values and spatial transformations of the newspaper.

### **The Literary Impact of the Newspaper Form**

Writing a history of the popular British press in 1914, literary critic and industry observer James D. Symon notes that the success, from the 1880s onwards, of weekly publications such as Sir George Newnes' *Tit-Bits* reflected an appetite on the part of the consumer for short, juxtaposed and easily digestible nuggets of news and entertainment (Symon 252). This appetite for the well-signposted and visually striking newspaper was ultimately to contribute to the "New Journalism" of the two subsequent decades, and to drive changes, even beyond the popular or low-priced press, well into the twentieth century. Peter Keating has suggested that, in these last two decades of the nineteenth century, a person's taste in periodicals and newspapers was a more important class and cultural indicator than "dress, occupation or income" (Keating 399). While elitist authors of the period believed that a taste in cheap papers was the preserve of the working classes, others, George Gissing amongst them, recognised that those reading Symon's digestible

nuggets were in fact a large and difficult to classify mass (Keating 399).<sup>1</sup> This appetite for the fragmentary in the newspaper context parallels the visual economies utilised in the *papiers collés*. Symon makes explicit the link between fragmentation and the commercial when he tells the story of an Oxford college don who, finding a *Tit-Bits* forerunner in a railway carriage, describes its format as “somehow disconnected.” Symon claims that “In that disconnection the Don had, without knowing it, put his finger on the vital spot [. . .]. A powerful commercial mind had seen that the proletariat liked to be fed on scraps. Scraps, accordingly, he held out to them, and they came eagerly to buy” (252). Discernable in Symon’s story is the class hierarchy at work in contemporary British newspaper publishing. The criticism that greeted the development of the New Journalism can perhaps be seen as one based upon its commercial success, a success gained by the successful manipulation of the working class and lower middle class reading public.

By 1914, Symon is concerned by the spread of these principles equating commercial success with short and entertaining articles that eschew the more conventionally significant political or economic stories of the day in favour of the sensational tale or the human interest story. The popular press of his own day is fundamentally affected by the New Journalism, and he claims of the new reading experience with which he is confronted that “Behind it the expert can detect a sense of mental strain that may probably be invisible to those who conduct the paper. [. . .] although one can hardly go so far as to call it pathological, it is at the same time somewhat ominous” (257). Even at this advanced stage of the revolutionising of the appearance and function of the British popular press, this “mental strain,” presumably brought about by the efforts of reading the visually startling and strangely juxtaposed elements of the paper, indicates that anxiety accompanied commercialised visual experimentation wherever it occurred. These new forms, in the popular press and beyond in more expensive publications, brought home more clearly than ever that the newspaper reflected, as well as sated, the journalistic appetites of its own particular day. As Symon puts it, “Nothing must be stereotyped. Yesterday, when it was past, was dead. [. . .] New features had to be sought” (257). Here, he returns the “stereotype” term to its original association with the printing industry, and highlights the verbal ingenuity that was now expected of the press. Old sets of type, standardised headlines and previously used expressions had to be jettisoned in favour of a language, and therefore a paper, that would

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<sup>1</sup> Such “low” tastes in reading materials may well have been caused as much by present financial circumstances as by a poor education or an inadequate mind. Keating notes that an 1898 report calculated

express its particular day, and that day only. Language and lay-out, for the press of the early twentieth century, were vital to the commercial viability and mass cultural appeal of the newspapers.

By the time of Symon's writing, 1,609 newspapers were estimated to be operating in the UK (Keating 34), accommodating the needs of a reading public on its way to reaching the twenty million mark (Baldick 17). Claims that the 1870 Education Act was predominantly responsible for the increase in British readers over the turn of the century are now questioned (Keating 400; Nevett 86), and literacy levels might also be explained by, amongst other factors, the increasing popularity of the public and commercial lending libraries (Baldick 17-35) which made regular reading affordable. Symon describes the ubiquitous contemporary phenomenon of the press in a flurry of contradictions, claiming:

that great and terrible monster, omniscient, large-hearted, unsparing, benevolent, critical, hard to please good friend and fearful enemy, instrument at once of the highest wisdom, and of the deepest folly [. . .] holds all mankind in its grasp. There is no escaping the creature. It is at the door before the householder, bathed and shaved, has descended to the breakfast-room. During the morning meal, it interferes seriously, and amid protest, with the attention he ought to pay to the remarks of his wife. It is the companion of the bread-winner on his way to town, and supplies him with a stock of ready-made wisdom for the day (1).

Symon's comments highlight several key issues that can be seen to be central to the role of the newspaper in the modernist period. Most explicit is the reference to the capacity of the newspaper form for the colonisation of concrete space, as he expresses the impossibility of escape from newsprint. The press, personified, arrives in the private home almost of its own accord, an oblique reference perhaps to the cycles of supply and demand of information by which the relationship between the press and its public was orchestrated. The press began to alter in response to appetites for types of news and features, whilst at the same time presenting innovative suggestions as to just what those appetites might be. The press, or rather its representative in the form of the newspaper, infiltrates the private space of the breakfast room, and the public space of modern transportation as the "bread-winner" heads to town. Further, the presence of the newspaper in this private space has an impact on the verbal interaction between husband and wife, as the husband's due attentions are distracted by daily wisdom and, as Symon goes on to relate, "the news that his shares have improved" (1). The newspaper is also, then,

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that only 40,000 families in Britain had a sufficient income to purchase quality contemporary novels,

central to public discourse, providing a stock of wisdom that the reader will be able to dispense to, or discuss with, others. It also plays an important role in the economics of its city, passing on investment information to the modern man. Symon is clear in his demarcation of the gender affiliation of the newspaper. It is explicitly the modern *man* who will benefit from its contents, and it is *his* “companion” as he goes to contribute to the world of work. For Symon, while the newspaper, thanks to the monstrous press, is able to infiltrate private space and form a part of the morning rituals of its readers, it is connected primarily to a public, economic and patriarchal city space.

In a history of the phenomenon of the British New Journalism, and its impact on press practices in the early twentieth century, Joel H. Wiener identifies the decade 1880-1900 as “the watershed years” in the development of this new approach to newspaper production (Introduction xviii).<sup>2</sup> The New Journalism developed as a result of three strands of change: technological, economic and mass cultural. Between 1860 and 1900 “the electric telegraph, telephone, typewriter, high-speed rotary press, and half-tone block for the reproduction of photographs all came into regular use” (Wiener, Introduction xii). In this way the ease of access to news, the international scope of news-gathering, and the typographic form and visual economy of the newspaper were all altered or improved. Economically, the basis of the newspaper enterprise underwent change, as “Profits replaced ideas as the motor force of the new industry of journalism” (Wiener, Introduction xvii). In a mutually reinforcing relationship with this shift to the profit motive came a new, extensive working class audience which Wiener, echoing Raymond Williams, describes as being located on the social scale around where the “man on the knifeboard of the omnibus” sat (xvii). Wiener claims that “The relationship between business and journalism was redefined [. . .] when the number of purchasers of daily newspapers approximately quadrupled” (“How New” 56). Keating confirms that “The habit of a relaxed working-class Sunday spent reading the newspapers” had, by 1900, become “traditional” (Keating 409). The New Journalism was, then, a new approach to newspaper content, design and marketing, catering for a new mass audience and operating according to profit incentives newly tenable due to expanding literacy, and increasing population influx to urban areas, amongst the working and lower middle classes. While established papers from traditional presses, such as

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rather than relying on the offerings of the cheap newspaper and periodical press. See Keating, 405.

<sup>2</sup> Martin Conboy claims that the New Journalism may be better understood as extending into the 1930s, the period of press industrialisation dealt with in the following chapter of this book. See Conboy.

The Times, were initially sceptical of these changes to the newspaper form, the impact of the New Journalism was ultimately widespread as economic imperatives turned many presses from family businesses to primarily commercial and competitive operations in an increasingly saturated market. The atmosphere of competition, in addition to the shifting expectations of the buying public, generated an impulse to experimentation in terms of form and content. By Symon's time, commercial imperatives of display could be seen to influence the look of newspapers across the spectrum of class audience.<sup>3</sup>

Writing in 1905, Edward Dicey highlighted one of the key changes to newspaper lay-out then affecting the newspaper form when he claimed that "the newspaper-reading public of today wants [ . . . ] to have their mental food given them in minces and snippets, not in chops or joints" (qtd. in Wiener, "How New" 48). These short, juxtaposed elements of news, entertainment and advertisements are familiar from the visual economies of the *papiers collés*, which in turn reflected the predilections of the audience of the mass cultural form of the pre-War newspaper. Wiener concludes that it was in fact this period, of which the pasted works can be seen to mark the conclusion, from the onset of the New Journalism in 1880s Britain to the eve of war in 1914, which saw the biggest upheaval in newspaper production values, and indeed consumption values. While commercialisation, facilitated by technology, was the driving force behind these changes, the impacts were manifold. Most explicitly, content changed as sensational and human interest stories were found to grab the attention of the paying reader to a greater extent than the latest political scandal or analysis of the economy.

Alongside this content shift comes a correlative shift in lay-out and display, as the physical manifestation of the newspaper, its "minces and snippets," becomes a way of advertising the product itself. The snippets structure also makes possible a patchwork of stories, ads and illustrations and, in a final complexity, operates as a guide through this confusing patchwork. The lengthy and unbroken columns of the pre-New Journalism paper required the close and involved reading of a large body of text, with the eye and the interest guided by minimal signposts as to content. Distinguishing a leader article from an international affairs report was problematic for the consumer, and, pressed for time on a busy tram commute, finding the information required was a challenge. By contrast, the revolutionised form of the post-1880

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<sup>3</sup> For a general discussion of the twentieth century impact of the New Journalism, see Atkinson.



popular newspaper (and, later, of its more sober or traditional contemporaries) guided the eye to points of interest, by the use of striking typography, headlines and bylines. "The visual appearance of newspapers is a map to their understanding," as Wiener has it ("How New" 50). This function of a fragmented form as a visual map explaining or easing the reading process is a curious one if seen in the context of an infamously fragmented modernist literature. This literature's fragmentary style is often attributed to a process of reflection of the fast, hectic pace of contemporary life, its overwhelming and reifying pressures. Transferred to the newspaper, this fragmented form becomes the very means of a guide not only to the reading process, but also to modern, often urban, life itself. From disorientation in "high" literary form, to orientation in the mass cultural, the fragment's function and psychological impact shifts. This may be explained by the fact that newspaper fragments have their own internal, albeit compressed, logic and coherence. Each fragment functions to tell a story, make a point, or sell a commodity. Further, the structure of the newspaper, its concrete spatial economy into which these fragments are slotted, makes their navigation less problematic. The "snippets" of the newspaper, then, require the guiding structure of a system of headings and sections in order for them to function, or to fully assist the newspaper itself in functioning as a guide to contemporary urban life. The newspaper can be seen to reflect the changing city of modernity – Wiener's revolution of the press according to economic and technological input suggests that it does so at a fundamental level. Therefore its structure and look increasingly perform gymnastic stunts of lay-out and typography in order to adequately map that city-become-text for the daily reader.

The capacity of the newspaper to reflect daily reality is crucial, and it therefore functions as a text-city, offering the reader a key to orientation both through its own pages, and through the city which it comes to stand in for as well as to colonise. This operation is perhaps linked to the complex role of the newspaper in generating an appetite for its own form, and finding a form that adequately speaks to the people of its potential audience. In a dance between the commercially-driven press and the mass audience from which it seeks loyalty, it becomes unclear just who is responsible for the evolving form and content of the newspaper. Perhaps Dicey's suggestion of the public's appetite for "snippets" is correct, but it takes an already fragmented newspaper form to ascertain this. Wherever this appetite for the fragmentary stems from, the newspaper can in this sense be seen to operate in a similar way to any other contemporary commodity: it satiates a need that is instantiated by its availability. The newspaper can certainly be said to reflect the commercial drive of the period, and therefore, at this most

fundamental level, the city itself. W. T. Stead, writing in 1886, expressed the function of popular journalism as the creation of a situation in which “everything that can be talked about can also be written about” (qtd. in Wiener, “How New” 65). The popular press was therefore aiming to reflect the concerns, interests and passions of its readership. In this way, the press will function as “the eye and the tongue of the people. It is the visible speech if not the voice of democracy. It is the phonograph of the world” (qtd. in Wiener, “How New” 65). This phonographic function will translate the lived speech and lived experience of modernity onto a page newly equipped to reflect, order and represent that experience.

Developments in what could by the early twentieth century truly be considered a newspaper industry generated various levels of change. Within modernist literature, three key levels of impact are discernable. Firstly, the ubiquity of the newspaper form generates what might usefully be considered cameo appearances by newspapers in contemporary literature, helping to create verisimilitude in the evocation of modern life by virtue of their presence on the breakfast table. Secondly, the newspaper can function as a means of supplying intradiegetic material, journalistic content effectively “spilling out” into the literary text in which it is represented. When newspaper text itself finds its way into the high form of literature, formal clashes and interesting interactions occur which can be seen to run parallel to some of the questions raised by *papiers collés* works. Thirdly, where the newspaper is supposedly absent as far as the content of the story related is concerned, its structure, typography, tone or language may be present in a kind of “haunting” of the high text by a mutable commodity form. Rather than being explicitly present in the interest of reflecting the colour of modern life, this textual permutation brings about questions regarding the nature of language itself, drawing in the notion of language as a commodity (which the newspaper form seems to enact), and the possibility of a mass cultural language. Cameo appearance, content intrusion and formal/conceptual effect are three interlinked ways in which the newspaper may make its presence felt in the literature of the modernist period. Often one of these operations will drag another into the text, and it is frequently unclear just how the newspaper form is functioning in the context of the modernist novel, but given the revolutionary developments in the press and the central role of the newspaper in contemporary life, the newspaper will never be a neutral presence in literature. Baldassari, in discussing *papiers collés* materials, has claimed that “What is most characteristic of newsprint, more so than any other material, is its eminently impervious nature, the way it resists all forms of assimilation” (74). While the form was certainly visually distinctive, and

increasingly so in the competitive environment of the cheap press, when co-opted by a literary rather than plastic innovator this imperviousness falters. The language of newsprint becomes the colonising, ubiquitous presence that Symon outlines for the press, a colonisation that, for modernist writers as for pasted paper artists, is ambivalent. By looking at a selection of modernist texts, the three levels of newspaper impact can be seen in all their disruptive yet productive power.

### **Cameo Appearance: Pilgrimage and the Reading Experience**

In the first novel of Dorothy Richardson's Pilgrimage sequence, a cameo appearance by a newspaper occurs, one that reflects several of the issues raised by Symon's characterisation of the "monstrous" press. Miriam, Richardson's semi-autobiographical main protagonist, is given a newspaper of a relatively conservative form by the Miss Pernes, for whom she is working as a tutor. The reader is told that "She found a long column" (Richardson 1: 243), indicating that the snippet has not taken control of this particular paper. The content, too, is informative rather more than entertaining; she is given the paper so that she can read about educational policy. However, her eye is guided by a headline, "The Royal Commission on Education" (243). We are told that it is the Standard, a "penny rag, and probably not worth considering at all" (235), its popular status still a potential barrier to Miriam's interest, despite its relatively sober content.<sup>4</sup> The experience of reading the newspaper is a new one for Miriam, and as an accession into a new world it becomes ritualised through her behaviour. "As she read the room grew still. The memory of the talking and clinking supper-table faded, and presently even the ticking of the clock was no longer there" (243). Later, closing her reading experience: "The clock struck ten. Gathering up the newspaper she folded it neatly, put it on the hall-table and went slowly upstairs" (245). This experience of the newspaper in the relatively private sphere of the school house involves absorption, just as Symon's morning reader was so absorbed as to neglect his wife. Miriam also betrays a respect for the materiality of the newspaper as object in her careful folding and placing action. Later, in the second volume of the text, when she remarks on the

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<sup>4</sup> Richardson's own vigorous opinions on newspapers, and in particular their lay-out formats, can be found in a letter to Bryher (Annie Winifred Ellerman, novelist and co-editor of the film journal Close Up) from 1937: "We are bereft. The Morning Post, the only daily we can endure to have about, died to-day, by incorporation with Camrose's Daily Telegraph. [. . .] the Morning Post [. . .] Gave everyone, in fact a fair hearing. The D.T. is philistine entirely, from the atrocious accent of its writers to the abominations of its

green paper of an Irish nationalist pamphlet, the physical reality of popular print again intrigues her (Richardson 2: 442).

In contrast to this most personal interaction between reader and newspaper text, Miriam also realises the public function of the newspaper. In fact, her accession to the status of newspaper reader is simultaneously an engagement with public life, with the key issues of the modern world, and, most significantly, with a specifically patriarchal society. "No wonder people read newspapers. You could read about what was going on in the country, actually what the Government was doing at that very moment" (Richardson 1: 243). This statement draws out the newspaper's claim to veracity, in addition to its function as link to the structures of power in society, and its relation to "that very moment," the day of its publication. At this stage the newspaper-reading process remains ungendered, but the narrative goes on to reflect Miriam's thoughts when she notes that "Of course; men seemed to know such a lot because they read the newspapers and talked about what was in them. But anybody could know as much as the men sitting in the arm-chairs if they chose; read all about everything, written down for everybody to see. That was the freedom of the press" (243). The newspaper appears at the opening of this statement as a masculine preserve, the arm-chair discussions evoking a gentleman's club or private smoking room atmosphere. In addition, there is a reference here to the capacity of the newspaper to fuel public discourse rather than simply to reflect the already-said, which is implicit in Symon's suggestion that the "bread-winner" will make use of the newspaper's wisdom during the course of his day. However, access to the newspaper's encyclopaedic scope, in which one can "read all about everything," is a means by which Miriam can aspire to contribute to this public discourse on issues of national importance. The choice to read the newspaper, whose public operation ensures that its facts and features are "written down for everybody to see," is a kind of "freedom of the press." Miriam is able to access a masculine world by her discovery that the knowledge that fuels it is open to all via the conduit of the newspaper. Her interpretation of the "freedom of the press" as being an issue of egalitarian access, at the point of consumption rather than production, demonstrates that she has misunderstood this topical issue which "was one of those new important things, more important than facts and dates" (243). Subsequently, Miriam does mention that "Here was the free press that Milton had gone to prison for. Certainly it made a great difference" (243). The freedom

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entirely formless lay-out. It lifts the gorge. We think of trying the Herald, but fear its nasal sing-song of an

issue is perhaps here returned to the composition or publication stage. However, the phrase “Certainly it had made a difference” floats between the reference to Milton’s imprisonment and the subsequent statement of personal effect: “The room was quite changed. There was hardly any pain in the silent cane-seated chairs. There were really people making the world better. Now” (243). Again, the connection to current events is evoked as a primary feature of the newspaper form.

Miriam later links the educational issues of the column that she reads to issues of literacy and therefore access to newspapers. “Perhaps it was rather a happy fate to be a teacher in the Banbury Park school and read newspapers. There were plenty of people who could neither read nor write” (243-4). Given her appreciation of the power to become involved in public discourse facilitated by an ability, and an opportunity, to read the newspaper, this fate of people unable to read such texts seems a terrible one indeed. In fact, the power of the newspaper text is so great that it invades Miriam’s consciousness in an almost unmediated flow from public discourse to the most private of thoughts. Shortly after reading the newspaper, Miriam contemplates the possibility of suicide with the words “If you knew you were not wanted – you ought to get out of the way. Chloroform. Someone had drunk a bottle of carbolic acid” (244-5). It is possible that in scanning the newspaper this fragment of a story has lodged in her consciousness, shaping the way she articulates her thoughts. Whilst the newspaper allows access to a public discourse, then, it can also be seen to provide references for the structuring of private thought.

When Miss Jenny first, and somewhat warily, gives the Standard to Miriam so that she can read the leader on education, we are told that “Miriam accepted the large sheets with hesitating expressions of thanks, wondering rather fearfully what a leader might be and where she should find it. She knew the word” (234). To make your contribution to discussions on contemporary topics, you must first learn to navigate the newspaper, a process that in turn relies upon the understanding of a specific taxonomy. In fact, Miriam’s experience of the term “leader” comes from a childhood recollection in which her mother, having read the leaders, would offer comments on them to her father, only to be condescended to: “any discussion generally ended in his warning her not to believe a thing because she saw it in print, and a reminder that before she married she had thought that everything she saw in print was true, and quite often he would go

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ill-formed, leaky ideology” (“Letter To Bryher,” 339-340).



on to general remarks about the gullibility of women" (234). In a transgression of Symon's gendered reading experience, Miriam's mother has dared to be the reader of the newspaper and, further, to offer her comments on what is written. In order to manage this situation, her husband reminds her of her inability to understand the principles of fact and fiction, or to understand that the newspaper is, although presented as a conduit of factual information, always inflected by its own set of ideological assumptions. Miriam's mother has read the newspaper inappropriately, until her marriage, a union with a sounder mind, made this reading experience problematic for her.

The ridicule shown to Miriam's mother by her husband has a profound effect on her mode of reading: "that neighing laugh had come again and again all through the years until she sat meekly, flushed and suffering under the fierce gaslight, feeling every night of her life winter and summer as if the ceiling were coming down on her head, and read 'leaders' cautiously" (234-5). The self-consciousness of the inexperienced reader is demonstrated by her flushed appearance under the glare of the gaslight, and it is echoed by Miriam's own trepidation when she first considers taking up the Standard: "she would not read it at evening study. She had never had a newspaper in her hand before as far as she could remember. The girls would see that she did not know how to read it, and it would be snubby towards them to sit there [. . .] scrumpling a great paper while they sat with their books" (235). Reading the newspaper is here marked out as a different practice from the reading of literature, just as in the earlier scene she sketches between her mother and father, we see her father reading books while her mother scans the leaders. More significantly, her inexperience in reading this particular form of language is a potential source of embarrassment to Miriam, as her role as teacher depends on her significantly more advanced reading skills. Thrust into a world of reading with its own guiding principles, she experiences something of her mother's gas-lit anxiety.

When she finally comes to read the newspaper, Miriam repeats her mother's mistake, considering the paper as a means of access to "what was going on in the country, actually what the Government was doing" (243). Her reading experience that effaces the rest of the room, effectively stops the ticking of the clock and removes the sensation of the very chair on which she sits, is one in which she is fully absorbed by what her eyes take in. In this way she suffers from too close a proximity to the newspaper; as a transparent window onto actual events it operates as an alternative world, one which displaces her lived experience of reading. To fully

enter into public discourse, using the newspaper as her source of information, she will have to find a distance from this new form of text. Worries as to how to go about discussing issues raised in the newspaper subsequently absorb her mind during evening prayers (238). Miriam's accession to the masculine discourse of current affairs via the newspaper is a move that can be seen in parallel to her willingness to smoke cigarettes and play billiards, two other activities first seen performed by the men of *Pilgrimage*. However, to ensure discursive success she must learn *how* to read the newspaper, to navigate its lay-out and understand its relation to truth. The particular demands of the form were problematic for her mother, whose reading of the leaders serves only to highlight her uncomfortable shift into a world of contemporary events that should more properly remain the province of men. The Symonian order of newspaper readership in the domestic sphere is at once transgressed and reiterated in Richardson's text.

Thus, through what at first seems to be a mere cameo appearance, the newspaper brings about questions of gender status, identity and public and private discourse within *Pilgrimage*. Miriam as reader must analyse the very process of reading, considering reading ability, access to texts, and the gendered social expectations of certain kinds of writing. However, her wonder at the masculine domain of public discourse, embodied in the newspaper, has, by the latter two volumes of Richardson's text, worn off. The eloquence of such discourse, she suggests, "Skimmed off the surface, which was all they [men] could see, and set up neatly in forcible quotable words. The rest could not be shown in these clever, neat phrases" (Richardson 3: 62). This interest in the surface means that masculine, public forms of expression distance the hearer or reader from the reality such forms attempt to express. Of masculine representation Miriam notes: "There was a truth in it, but not anything of the whole truth. [. . .] all their thoughts false to life; everything neatly described in single phrases that are not true" (Richardson 3: 14). These commonly agreed forms of expression, these single phrases, allow life to escape. They are merely exchanged between participating men in the public sphere, in a way that recalls Symon's "bread-winner on his way to work," who makes use of a "stock of ready-made wisdom" (Symon 1).

Richardson has Miriam complete a journey of discovery, in which she comes to realise the potential of a feminine form of expression. Such a form foregoes the exactitude of masculine, empirical speech or writing, but in doing so moves closer to reality as Miriam understands it to be. Moving beyond a reading experience which relies upon "the miracle of intelligibility, the

taken-for-granted, unconsidered revelation lying behind the mere possibility of so arranging words that meaning emerges from their relationship" (Richardson 4: 454), she finds a new mode of understanding the world – one which transforms even the banal daily realities of the ad. "I ceased to look for meanings," she claims, "took a phrase or a single word from its context and let it carry me into fresh contemplation of familiar realities. [. . .] that made even advertisements read like lyrics" (Richardson 4: 454). Miriam's reading at this later stage in her life comes to echo the cut-and-paste practice of an editor, finding new meanings and resonances through juxtapositions. She may have come to question the newspaper's relation to truth, but she has internalised something of its practices.

### **Intrusion: Textual Infection in The Secret Agent**

Joseph Conrad's The Secret Agent (1907)<sup>5</sup> is an example of a comparatively early modernist text in which newsprint already plays a significant role in the texture of daily London life, and comes to infiltrate the consciousness of several of its characters. It illustrates the first and second levels of impact of the newspaper form. Moving beyond mere cameo appearance, the newspaper's content bleeds into the surrounding text with alarming results for one protagonist in particular. Just as Miriam's suicidal speculations bring back a half-remembered reference to a news item, so comrade Ossipon's private consciousness becomes invaded by the language of newspaper reports, a haunting that therefore occurs for Conrad's text as a whole.<sup>6</sup> Verloc's claim to operate a legitimate business selling stationery and newspapers, with the implicit suggestion that the papers contain pornographic material, places him in a shady realm that serves to obscure the

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<sup>5</sup> It should be noted that The Secret Agent was first published in serialised form in 1906, in the patriotic American magazine Ridgways: A Militant Weekly for God and Country. This origin in the press underscores the importance of the newspaper form for the text as a whole. Confirming this is the fact that the catalyst for the central story is, of course, a drive for publicity, forced upon Verloc by Vladimir. For such publicity, the newspaper would at this time have been the only medium.

<sup>6</sup> Conrad concedes in his "Author's Note" that the novel is based upon a real case of bungled bombing at Greenwich, which occurred in 1894 and was widely reported in the press. Thus newspaper reports are crucial to the text from its very origins. However, Conrad later vigorously denied any real knowledge of the 1894 incident, claiming in a letter to Ambrose J. Barker, 1 September 1923: "I never knew anything of what was called, if I remember rightly, the 'Greenwich Bomb Outrage'. I was out of England when it happened, and thus I never read what was printed in the newspapers at the time" (qtd. in Watt 113). Jacques Berthoud has claimed that Conrad in fact undertook extensive research into the newspaper representation of the case. See Berthoud 102-103. The most thorough exploration of the novel's grounding in the 1894 episode is to be found in Sherry. Rishona Zimring goes further, suggesting that Conrad learned to read English by making use of newspapers as well as novels. His understanding of the very language in which he writes is thus informed by the particular formulations of journalistic phrasing. See Zimring 336.

even murkier dealings in information which are the true nature of his business. Throughout the novel, paper as a material presence is linked with the unknown or unfathomable, from Stevie's obsessional drawings of concentric circles,<sup>7</sup> to the propaganda materials penned by Ossipon and the anarchist committee, to the files held on Verloc himself. By contrast to the impenetrability or shadiness of these papers, the newspaper form is informative throughout the novel, bringing streams of information into the story that have a direct impact on the course of the narrative.

This informative nature of the newspaper is a product of its responsiveness to events. When the explosion that causes Stevie's death occurs, the news is reported in the latest edition of the newspapers only two and a half hours later. As Ossipon says, "They have been yelling the news in the streets since two o'clock. I bought the paper, and just ran in here" (*Secret* 65). The newspaper that Ossipon has picked up embodies the tenor of its reportage. "It was a good-sized, rosy sheet, as if flushed by the warmth of its own convictions which were optimistic" (*Secret* 65). This literally rosy view of the news will seem retrospectively inappropriate when Stevie's death, and the personal ramifications for Winnie Verloc, become clear. The physical expression of the spirit of the news reported by this "rosy" paper can perhaps be seen to parallel the green paper on which the Irish nationalist pamphlet that Miriam finds is printed. The importance of visual impact in finding an audience has been noted in Wiener's analysis of the economic imperatives of the New Journalism and subsequent incarnations of the press. In a market so competitive, and in such a state of constant revolution, that the press boys yell their news less than three hours after the incidents themselves take place, catching the eye of your appropriate audience becomes crucial. The newspaper relating the tale of the Greenwich Park explosion has certainly found its appropriate audience, for Ossipon, like the newspaper, is both "good-sized" and "rosy," frequently flushed with his own convictions.

It is Ossipon that relates the newspaper report to the Professor, and hence to the reader of Conrad's text. He does so in a clipped and telegraphic style, returning the language of the

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<sup>7</sup> Stevie's circles are often read as pertaining to time, eternity and the cosmic. However, they also, when described in Conrad's text, take on a material form that has more to do with typographical representation. Stevie, we are told, is "drawing circles, circles; innumerable circles, concentric, eccentric; a coruscating whirl of circles that by their tangled multitude of repeated curves [. . .] and confusion of intersecting lines suggested a rendering of cosmic chaos" (*Secret* 45-46). The phrasing makes use of alliteration, but these multiple "c"s are voiced in a variety of ways, suggesting that Conrad's aim may in fact have been a visual or typographic representation, rather than a vocal one. The visual whirl of "c"s on the page, all be they successive rather than concentric, echo Stevie's own obsessive drawing.



newspaper to the original mode of its information-gathering: "Bomb in Greenwich Park. There isn't much so far. Foggy morning. Effects of explosion felt as far as Romney Road and Park Place. Enormous hole in the ground [. . .]. That's all. The rest's mere newspaper gup" (65). This "newspaper gup" that fills up the space left by absence of information is for Ossipon an empty language, and the inadequacy of language becomes an issue within the text when the Professor challenges Ossipon's labeling of the bombing as "criminal." "How am I to express myself?" asks Ossipon, "One must use the current words" (66). The Professor, the character that best expresses an extreme point of anarchy, is taking issue with the notion of criminality itself, but Ossipon's response points to a language that is exhausted, or that fails to adequately express reality. Just as the "newspaper gup" papers over a gap in the information available to the press, so language is shown to bear a poor relation to real experience, just as Miriam Henderson eventually concluded. Winnie Verloc's silence when she learns of Stevie's death seems logical in this context.

This sense of degraded or exhausted language is connected to the press explicitly when Ossipon leaves his discussion with the Professor in the Silenus beer hall:

In front of the great doorway a dismal row of newspaper sellers standing clear of the pavement dealt out their wares from the gutter. [. . .] the grimy sky, the mud of the streets, the rags of the dirty men harmonized excellently with the eruption of the damp, rubbishy sheets of paper soiled with printers' ink. The posters, maculated with filth, garnished like tapestry the sweep of the kerbstone (72).

This textual filth is described in visceral terms, the gutter being the most suitable place for the newspaper, its purveyor, and its language. A parallel could perhaps be drawn to the murky premises of Mr. Verloc in Brett Street,<sup>8</sup> although the street itself is, we are told, a space into which the newspaper does not find its way without a buyer's agency: "The newsboys never invaded Brett Street. It was not a street for their business. And the echo of their cries drifting along the populous thoroughfares, expired between the dirty brick walls without reaching the threshold of the shop" (168). This space in which colonisation by the newspaper and its language must be a voluntary process, makes the shop a kind of informational backwater.<sup>9</sup> This is the

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<sup>8</sup> The references to the soiled texts of the gutter also implicitly refer to the "dirty" texts of pornography (and, by association, revolutionary politics) sold in the Verlocs' shop. Further discussion on the juxtaposition between sexual and political filthiness can be found in Shaffer.

<sup>9</sup> The status of the Verlocs' shop as distanced from the circulation of newspapers may be seen in parallel to the shop's unusual practices in selling goods. The apparent trade of the shop, stationery sales, masks the



means by which Conrad is able to increase narrative tension as a newspaper, carried by Chief Inspector Heat, makes its way slowly towards Winnie, and reveals the story of her brother's death. The shop is thus a space into which text must be displaced.

The issue of fragmentation, crucial to the contemporary newspaper,<sup>10</sup> occurs in the text in two significant instances, each connected to the creation of a patchwork of information. Firstly, there is the fragmentation of Stevie's exploded body, which is itself described in a fragmentary fashion by Ossipon's telegraphic delivery of the newspaper report. Stevie's body and clothing are gathered together, save the textual fragment of his address label that Heat enables to pass through the city until it is deciphered by Winnie. The information regarding the case is pieced together by Heat, and by the newspapers, which begin with a story so sketchy as to prompt Ossipon to claim that "There isn't much so far" (65). Finally, the fragments of the story are pieced together by its most significant reader, Winnie Verloc. Bodily fragmentation is again referred to when the Professor threatens Heat with a bomb blast that will kill them both. The Professor states that "you may be exposed to the unpleasantness of being buried together with me, though I suppose your friends would make an effort to sort us out as much as possible" (83).<sup>11</sup> When the fragment of Stevie's coat arrives with Heat in the Verlocs' shop, he first extracts a newspaper from his pocket: "Chief Inspector Heat suddenly pulled out a pink newspaper he had bought less than half an hour ago. He was interested in horses" (169). The timing of his purchase is significant here as it indicates that this is a recent publication in which the fragments of evidence will be drawn together to create a clearer picture than any available in earlier editions. Heat's interest in horses has been the cause of this purchase, and we are told that having become suspicious of all claims to truth as a result of his job, he "relieved the instinct of credulity implanted in the human breast by putting unbounded faith in the sporting prophets of that particular evening publication" (169). Heat's use of the newspaper to salve a need for

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actual trade in pornographic material, and the exchange of political information. For a reading of the Verlocs' shop as a challenge to capitalist values of display and consumption see Lindner.

<sup>10</sup> Con Coroneos has noted that the novel as a whole is somewhat fragmented, and that despite its origins in a serialised format, "the novel has trouble thinking consecutively; its structure resembles those overlapping circles which simple Stevie endlessly draws" (48). The contemporary newspaper makes a more relevant parallel, given its prominence in the text as a whole.

<sup>11</sup> Conrad's fascination with explosion and fragmentation is visible in his correspondence. In a letter to Edward Garnett in 1897 he draws together the notions of textual and bodily fragmentation in a striking manner: "Where do you think the illumination [. . .] came from? Why! From Your words, words, words. They exploded like stored powder barrels. [. . .] An explosion is the most lasting thing in the universe. It

credulity that is presented in religious terms seems an indulgence when seen in contrast to Winnie's acute need for the information that will sit alongside the sporting predictions: the details of her brother's death.

When Ossipon and the Professor later convene in the Silenus beer hall, Ossipon is fingering a "much-folded" newspaper (245), an unusual state for that commodity to be in, given the rapid turnover of news, and high number of new editions, that have characterised the press throughout the novel. "The Professor raised his head at the rustle. 'What's that paper? Anything in it?'" (245). Ossipon replies that there is nothing in it, an expression designed to imply that there is nothing worthy of their attention, although his lengthy ownership of the paper indicates that there certainly is something of significance contained within its pages, since "The thing's ten days old" (246). The ritual of reading that has occurred, and that is responsible for the much-folded appearance of this outdated paper, is explained when we are told that "Before returning it to his pocket he stole a glance at the last lines of the paragraph. They ran thus: '*An impenetrable mystery seems destined to hang for ever over this act of madness or despair.*'" (246). Beyond the statement of the headline "Suicide of Lady Passenger from a cross-Channel Boat" (246), the story seems to escape the language in which it is contained. The sensationalist tactic employed by the newspaper in the use of the "impenetrable mystery" phrase, and the undecided suggestion of madness *or* despair, has had an absolutely harrowing effect on Ossipon as reader.

This haunting of Ossipon by the text of the article has resulted in the taking over of his consciousness by its phraseology. "Comrade Ossipon was familiar with the beauties of its journalistic style. [. . .] He knew every word by heart. '*An impenetrable mystery...*' And the robust anarchist, hanging his head on his breast, fell into a long reverie. He was menaced by this thing in the very sources of his existence" (246). Ostensibly, this "thing" is the memory of his abandonment of Winnie Verloc, but it seems reasonable to suggest that it is in fact the textual representation of that incident in the language of the newspaper that is responsible for "menacing" his mental and physical robustness. What haunts him is a newspaper clipping that he has created through his own mental assimilation of the language of the report.<sup>12</sup> This haunting

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leaves disorder, remembrance, room to move, a clear space" See Conrad, "Letter to Edward Garnett" 343-344.

<sup>12</sup> Various phrases incorporating "madness" and "despair" also haunt Conrad's text as a whole. In the "Author's Note" he claims to be "telling Winnie Verloc's story to its anarchistic end of utter desolation, madness, and despair" (12). The text ends with the Professor's exit: "He walked frail, insignificant,

prevents him from fulfilling his customary liaisons with women in the parks of the city, as his mental space becomes the vector of the clipping, allowing it to circulate, for him, amongst the public spaces of the city: "He could not issue forth to meet his various conquests, those that he courted on benches in Kensington Gardens [. . .] without the dread of beginning to talk to them of an impenetrable mystery destined...He was becoming scientifically afraid of insanity lying in wait for him amongst these lines" (246). Ossipon's fear that his journalistically invaded consciousness will erupt into public discourse at an inopportune moment seems a fear born of mental instability, although the "scientifically afraid" phrase indicates that he is perhaps invoking his medical training to rationalise this bizarre experience. At the very moment when madness seems to lie between the lines of the article, Conrad's own lines first become colonised by its language. The "impenetrable mystery destined..." of the above quotation is the first appearance of the phraseology of this specific article breaking beyond the quotation marks of reportage and finding their way into the narrator's representation of Ossipon's parallel experience of textual colonisation.

For Ossipon, the newspaper has been the source of unwelcome knowledge, in a reversal of the knowledge-hunger of Winnie in confrontation with Heat and his racing paper:

Comrade Ossipon's knowledge was as precise as the newspaper man could make it – up to the very threshold of the '*mystery destined to hang for ever...*'. Comrade Ossipon was well informed. He knew what the gangway man of the steamer had seen: 'A lady in a black dress and a black veil, wandering at midnight alongside on the quay. "Are you going by the boat, ma'am," he had asked her, encouragingly. "This way." She seemed not to know what to do. He helped her on board. She seemed weak.' (246-7).

It is unclear how the single quotation marks in the above passage operate. The fragments are those of a journalistic style, but "he had asked her" is not the language of reportage, but rather appears to indicate Ossipon's own restaging of the event in his consciousness. If these single quotation marks do denote Ossipon's own, irrepressible interior monologue, then this is now restructured according to a journalistic style.<sup>13</sup>

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shabby, miserable – and in the terrible simplicity of his idea calling madness and despair to the regeneration of the world" (249). Conrad also mentions the phrase in a letter to R.B. Cunninghame Graham in a letter of 7 October 1907. See Watt 112-113.

<sup>13</sup> In a parallel manner, critical works on *The Secret Agent* have absorbed the phrase "Greenwich Bomb Outrage" which Conrad cites in his letter to Barker, noted above. He seems to have drawn this from (allegedly recent) research into contemporary reports on the 1894 bombing, or from the pamphlet that Barker had sent to him, David Nicoll's *The Greenwich Mystery* (1897). The phrase "Greenwich Bomb

It is the newspaper clipping itself, an instance of public printed language transferred to his private mental sphere, that Ossipon views as the cause of his downfall, rather than the real events that preceded the reported tragedy, and in which he was an instrumental player. The clipping sends ripples of effect back out into the public domain when the mental instability it brings about in him has an impact upon his career. "His revolutionary career [. . .] was menaced by an impenetrable mystery – the mystery of a human brain pulsating wrongfully to the rhythm of journalistic phrases. [. . .] it was inclining towards the gutter" (249). The connection between the gutter and the press, and between this relationship and the filthiness of stereotyped or inadequate language has already been established. Ossipon's new orientation towards the gutter is therefore indicative of his textual malady, his infestation by the phraseology of contemporary journalism. "Already his robust form [. . .] was marching in the gutter as if in training for the task of an inevitable future. Already he bowed his broad shoulders [. . .] as if ready to receive the leather yoke of the sandwich board. [. . .] He walked disregarded" (249). This physical decline and preparation for a job as a sandwich board man may simply be a pragmatic realisation on the part of the mentally unstable Ossipon that one of the city's most menial jobs will be his destiny. However, the job of sandwich board man is also a literal manifestation of his complete domination at the hands of commercial print. As text triumphs over his body just as it has over his mind, Ossipon becomes a gutter-bound text himself, as disregarded as the papers littering the curb outside the Silenus beer hall. The newspaper has here moved far beyond its role as accurate window-dressing for the evocation of 1907 London, and become a powerful, and potentially destructive, psychological force.

### **Conceptual Effect: Berlin Alexanderplatz as Transient Text**

To consider the most advanced level of newspaper impact in the modernist text, that of conceptual effect, it is necessary to move further into the modernist period, and further into the development of the newspaper industry. Alfred Döblin's Berlin Alexanderplatz of 1929 is a text that depends upon an established relationship between the city, commerce, and the newspaper. In a discussion of the literature of modernist Berlin, Peter Fritzsche has claimed that:

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"Outrage" loses its headline capitals and its quotation marks in much of the critical literature on The Secret Agent. See, for example, GoGwilt 173.

In an age of mass urban literacy, the city as place and the city as text defined each other in mutually constitutive ways. The crush of people and welter of things in the modern city revised ways of reading and writing, and these representational acts, in turn, constructed a second-hand metropolis which gave a narrative to the concrete one and choreographed its encounters (Berlin 1).

In this context, Fritzsche's "representational acts" are the city's newspapers and journals, organs of a mutual constitution between city and text as they guide patterns of urban behaviour, manipulate commercial appetites and influence the thoughts of the city dweller. In turn, the city offers an endless stream of activity which finds a spatialised textual correlate in the newspaper that is vital to its possibilities as a host to contemporary life. This triangulation between the reading habits and expectations of the city dweller, the newspaper form and the concrete space of the city places each within a process of constant regeneration. Far from operating as a mere textual excrescence of the relationship between contemporary man and his urban context, the newspaper can be seen as prompter, guide and patternner of praxis. Berlin Alexanderplatz is a text which draws out the capacities of the newspaper, and its attendant discourse of advertising, to choreograph the encounters of late twenties Berlin. Here all possible levels of the impact of the newspaper form are explored. Döblin's visceral and celebratory use of the newspaper recalls James Joyce's Ulysses, although Berlin as a city had a relationship to newsprint as different from that of Joyce's Dublin as from the London described by Richardson or Conrad.

The interrelationship between Berlin's built environment and its uses, and the reflection or redirection of this in the textual format, may be considered an "architextural" one. This architextural element's expression in the newspaper form in the city – newspaper – urban dweller triangulation is an interesting one to consider when it is itself embedded within another text. While the impermeability that Baldassari ascribes to the visual impact of the newspaper clipping can perhaps be more easily retained in the plastic context of other primarily visual elements, it becomes problematic when that context is itself textual. When authors relinquish control of the borders between the commercialised text of newspapers and ads and their own literary output by assimilating these textual interlopers without the aid of a clear lay-out practice as a guide to the eye, they suggest an equivocation between the textual context of the "literary" work and the textual imports. In fact, the designation of the former as "literary" itself becomes difficult, particularly in cases such as Berlin Alexanderplatz, where the addition of newspaper material, ads, songs and jingles comes to saturate the text. The status of the text itself as a



bestseller may also be considered in this context, suggesting that the book struck a chord with a population familiar with many of the references that circulated within it. Peter Barta has stated that its publication in October 1929 constituted the “first and most successful evocation of modern Berlin” (Barta 78).

Just as the newspaper benefits from both creating a familiarity with the city, and reflecting the features with which its dwellers are familiar, so Döblin’s own text comes to benefit from this dual relationship, reflecting urban life and suggesting further ways in which it can be understood. By thinking of the text as a literary incarnation of the newspaper form, the boundaries maintaining this distinction fall apart, a process set in motion by Döblin’s own generous importing of the mass cultural. The consideration of Berlin Alexanderplatz as itself a newspaper is further reinforced by the content that characterises the sections of the text not explicitly drawn from fictional newspaper reports, and not explicitly drawing on journalistic language. In an attempt to artificially separate the central story of Franz and his criminal life from what can perhaps be understood as pasted elements of newspaper reportage, it becomes clear that the subject matter in both is closely related. Fritzsche claims that “One west German paper, which published over 150 articles detailing various incidents of murder, robbery, and suicide in the last two weeks of December 1910, had contented itself with publishing only three similar notices just thirty years earlier” (Berlin 59). Murder, robbery, prostitution and mental ill health feature prominently in the subject matter of the central story of the novel, as well as surfacing in the pasted clippings that occur throughout. Reflecting the tenor of contemporary life, as well as generating and supplying contemporary appetites for sensational stories, both the Berlin newspaper form and Döblin’s own novel translate such content into high levels of circulation.

Fritzsche characterises the press material of Berlin as a “word city,” a “social text that simultaneously reflected, distorted, and reconstituted the city” (Berlin 10). In a reflective capacity, the press operates as a guide to Berlin life, but in processes of distortion and reconstitution it can also be seen as a participant in the creation of the texture of city life itself and, just as with Döblin’s text, of ways of understanding it. The malleability of the newspaper form and its operations, noted by Symon above, are crucial to the word city: “Because it wished to be all things to all people, the word city remained an unstable, pliable form, which allowed readers to make sense of the changing inventory of the city and respond to its speculative,

playful voices, but which also guided readers simply by measuring and standardizing the urban inventory" (Berlin 3). Poised between the provision of stability and the proliferation of chaos, the word city of the press alternates between operating as a textual and visual mapping of the shifting city, and a shifting map choreographing that city and its encounters. The instability of the newspaper narrative is demonstrated in Döblin's text as newspaper clippings, headlines and linguistic structures pass through Franz Biberkopf's own word city, edited by the narrator. In turn, Döblin's text cannot help but dramatise this instability, as traditional literary narrative structures or voices are drowned in a sea of commercial appropriations. The text must also contend with the shifting shapes of the concrete city of Berlin, which is shown to be in a constant state of upheaval, with frequent references to demolitions, constructions and repairs.

While Döblin's Berlin contains plenty of architectural change, Fritzsche points out that demographic change was also having a serious impact on the city during the first decades of the twentieth century. As a result of an increasing influx of people into the urban sphere, and of an increase in the distance between home and work commuted by dwellers in a rapidly expanding city, the number of strangers to the heart of the city was on the rise. As Fritzsche states, "These strangers found in newspapers indispensable guides to unfamiliar urban territory" (Berlin 8). He goes on to note the status of newspapers as "provisional texts" (Berlin 8) in the context of this constant change and renewal. Thus the provisionality of the form must be seen as reflective of contemporary Berlin as *itself* a provisional entity. Fritzsche reports that trade in these provisional texts was brisk, and that as early as 1900 "Berlin had the greatest newspaper density of any city in Europe" (Berlin 16). By 1914, the German press was publishing 4,200 newspapers and 6,500 journals (Berlin 53). Fritzsche suggests that it was in the first instance the task of the popular or penny press to facilitate the orientation of the city dweller. In light of the considerations of the New Journalism above it seems pertinent to note that this mapping function first comes into being in the area of the press, the mass cultural, where lay-out and visual innovation was the first to take hold. The popular press was the home of the earliest attempts to "make the new world of the industrial city sensible to readers, recasting location (the newspaper in the metropolis) into function (the newspaper for the metropolis)" (Fritzsche, Berlin 20). These newspapers "did more than introduce the metropolis; they calibrated readers to its tremulous, machine-tempered rhythms" (Fritzsche, Berlin 16). They also "trained readers how to move through streets and crowds in addition to guiding them among sensational sights" (Fritzsche, Berlin 16). This dual function was essential for the stranger to the city, and Fritzsche states that over time readers

“filled in the blank spaces of their mental maps of Berlin. Not to read the newspaper was to risk losing orientation” (Berlin 20).

In functioning as a prompt to accurate mental mappings of the city, the form of the newspaper itself came to reflect the crowded and bustling Berlin in which it operated. The word city was dramatised in each successive popular press publication as “The rapid succession of juxtaposed articles recreated the big-city crowd of strangers” (Fritzsche, Berlin 22). The interrelationship between word city and actual city was so tangled that “Front-page formats intensified the urban experience that front-page stories sought to report on” (Fritzsche, Berlin 22). The formats of contemporary newspapers can also be said to be undertaking the alignment of readers with the rhythms of Berlin, or rather with the rhythms of contemporary commercial culture. The snippet form identified by Edward Dicey as characterising the appetite of the modern reader is in evidence in Berlin’s popular press, and again that press demonstrates the commodification of news as a product for an audience of consumers. This commodification was at the heart of the implications of newspaper clippings in the plastic context of the *papiers collés*.

Döblin’s dramatisation of Berlin comes to figure as an exploration of *the* city of modernity, and the experience of daily life in this context. “Berlin has remained the paradigmatic modern city” explains Fritzsche, “because its character has been forcefully determined by the experience of transience” (Berlin 31). This experience of transience is one that leaves the city dweller without a stabilised identity: their ontological sense is unsettled by the flux that surrounds them. Art historian Karl Scheffler, writing in 1910, concluded that the tragedy of Berlin was “forever to become and never to be,” meaning that the city had an inherently improvisational character (Scheffler 219). This ontological instability of course suggests a kind of freedom, or the possibility of a constant and regenerative becoming in an urban environment itself full of change. Berlin was, through its architectural destructions and creations, in a state of constant reimagining as it shook off its past. The narrator describes the change affecting the city’s concrete identity when he claims that: “where Jürgens stationery store was, they have torn down the house and put up a building fence instead. [. . .]. Hahn’s department store still stands, emptied, evacuated, and eviscerated, with nothing but red tatters hanging over the show-windows [. . .]. Dust thou art, to dust returnest” (Döblin 219-220). The religious language of the final line here evokes the possibility of a life beyond destruction, and a cyclical process of renewal that seems to chime with Scheffler’s conception of Berlin as being in the process of

“becoming.” The connection between this process of renewal and the cycles of commodities is highlighted when the narrator goes on to note of ancient cities such as Rome and Babylon: “In the first place, I must remark they are digging those cities up again, as the illustrations in last Sunday’s edition show, and, in the second place, those cities have fulfilled their purpose, and we can now build new cities. Do you cry about your old trousers when they are moldy and seedy? No, you simply buy new ones, thus lives the world” (220). The possibility of the new depends upon the destruction of the old, which lives on only as a historical curiosity in the now richly illustrated newspapers, history become commodity. The new cities are simply part of a new world that replaces what it loses or destroys by the expenditure of money. The connection between architectural destruction and renewal and the allure of the commodity is strangely dramatised when, once again, the narrator returns to the store: “Hahn’s department store is entirely wrecked, all the other houses are full of shops, but they only look like shops, as a matter of fact, there are nothing but calls, just decoy calls, twittering bird-notes, crinkle-crackle, a chirping without woods” (503). In this urban sphere, the call of the commercial haunts stores that are waiting to be filled with their purchasable destinies. Commercial cycles and architectural regeneration are thus linked in contemporary Berlin.

Architecture offers a comparatively stable sense of time, one which can be held in opposition to the mass printed form. The *papiers collés* illustrated the ontological instability felt by France as a nation when the developmental chain of past, present and future art was interrupted by the incorporation of perishable materials. Architectural revolution is a kick free from history, and as the city partakes of a transience that contains the possibilities of becoming, so its dwellers can kick free of history and reinvent themselves. This is certainly what Franz Biberkopf attempts to do, and the structure of the text reflects his efforts to escape his past and transform his life into a different experience. The positive possibilities of transience or ongoing change are set out from the start, when the introduction to the first book of the story reads: “Here in the beginning, Franz Biberkopf leaves Tegel Prison into which a former foolish life had led him [. . .] and now he vows to lead a decent life” (3). The connection between the newspaper and travel through the city is also made clear in Fritzsche’s claim that, according to one contemporary study, “every other streetcar rider read big-city dailies going to and from work” (*Berlin* 17-18). Further, he explores the centrality of tram travel to the life of a contemporary Berliner when he notes that a 1913 study established that the yearly average of tram journeys per person was three hundred and six (*Berlin* 61). Inevitably, this centrality resulted in the capacity

of the tram system to generate newsworthy material of its own: "Streetcars became part of the familiar interior of the city; articles reported on the life of streetcar conductors, told of the types to be found on the night bus, and examined the difference ways passengers had of holding their tickets" (Fritzsche, Berlin 70). The peculiarly contemporary experience of the recreation of an interior space in the company of a mass of strangers made the tram journey a social experience for which no precedents existed. The social awkwardness resulting from this new experience required working out in a common discourse, and the newspaper, with its mass appeal and existing connection to travel, seemed the ideal place for this exploration of tram transport.

Berlin Alexanderplatz makes use of both the city's tram system and the newspaper to introduce characters or information to the wider text, and opens its story by explicitly connecting these two devices in the introduction of its central character, Franz Biberkopf. Having been released from Tegel prison, Franz takes the tram into the city proper. At first the pace of life outside the walls of the prison, indicated by the velocity of passing trams, is terrifying: "He let one street-car after another go by, pressed his back against the red wall, and did not move" (4). Contemporary life also makes itself felt on the tram, in the form of newspapers read by fellow travellers. "Something inside him screamed in terror [. . .]. The tip of his nose turned to ice; something was whirring over his cheek. *Zwölf Uhr Mittagszeitung, B.Z., Berliner Illustrierte, Die Funkstunde*" (5). Fritzsche reports that "BZ was a genuine boulevard newspaper not only because it was sold exclusively on the streets, but because it presented the streets as the distinctive stage of the metropolis" (79). The appearance of this particular newspaper therefore gives some indication as to where Franz's story will be played out: on the streets.

Just as the frequent appearance of newspapers in Franz's Berlin is an accurate reflection of the prevalence of the press, the central importance of the tram system also reflects a contemporary reality. Berlin was known for a vast network of mechanical transportation, a network that eventually centered upon Alexanderplatz itself, with a major tram terminal and an underground train station linking the square to great swathes of the city. Alexanderplatz is thus the epitome of transience, a space of never-ending becoming and going. Franz's immediate collision with the speed and transience of tram travel, and the bewildering rush of city life held in the newspaper form set up two central city experiences that serve to structurally and thematically generate Döblin's own text. Both tram and newspaper are ambivalent experiences, as shall be seen, offering a systematisation that suggests order and regulation (the situation from



which, at Tegel, Franz has just been liberated), and disorder and chaos (the urban situation into which he is now being flung).

In comparing Berlin Alexanderplatz to Dos Passos' Manhattan Transfer of 1925, Barta has identified three elements that constitute a thematic analogy between the two texts: "The notion of novelty, the process of never-ending construction, and the lack of a sense of the past" (178). These three features can also be seen to be central to the newspaper form, and to the pasted paper works to which, in a different cultural form, it contributes. Novelty, construction or process and ahistoricity are explored in both the works of cubist collagists and in Döblin's text, and in both cases they are facilitated or reinforced by the presence of the newspaper form. For Döblin, the text must be created without the presence of an authorial voice. This is a possible parallel with Picasso and Braque's attempts to subvert the notion of the expression of a single genius consciousness in art through the adoption of an editorial role. Döblin's understanding of authorial expression concludes that "I am not I but the streets, the streetlamps, various events, and nothing beyond that" (qtd. in Barta 179). Thus the author and his expression is confined to, and effaced by, a word city that takes on its own life, kicking free of the history of its own production. The surrendering of power by the author leaves the story in the hands of the narrator, or narrators, who all prove opinionated, unreliable, and limited in the scope of their observations. Sometimes they operate merely as seeing eyes in the city, abandoning Franz's story to simply convey the experience of looking. Elsewhere, this collage of narrative voices is broken by the insertion of newspaper clippings, advertisements, songs and jingles. The grand claims of the ads echo the unreliability of the narrators, but they are also part of the seeming attempt of Berlin as word city to take over control of the text. Side stories from the clippings introduce arbitrary information and characters, interrupting the Franz tale, and trams release or remove minor characters according to whim. At times, it seems as though Berlin itself is in charge of the text. In this way, Döblin's "I am not I but the streets" is by no means a voluntary surrender, but a crowding out by the city's own capacity to generate narratives, by the circulation of Berliners via inanimate advertisements and transport systems.

While at first both newspapers and trams are sources of a feeling of disorientation for Franz, once he becomes accustomed to the transience of the city experience, he is able to use them to orientate himself. The text, too, gestures towards the possibility of orientation when the timetables of tram routes constantly interrupt the narrative whenever a tram passes the eye of the

narrator or of Franz himself: "Car No. 68 runs across Rosenthaler Platz, Wittenau, Nordbahnhof, Heilanstalt, Weddingplatz, Stettiner Station, Rosenthaler Platz, Alexanderplatz, Straussberger Platz, Frankfurter Allee Station, Lichtenburgh, Herzberge Insane Asylum. [. . .] Fares for adults are 20 pfennigs, for schoolchildren 10 pfennigs" (53). This sense of orientation is perhaps undermined by the fact that trams also introduce a wide variety of characters, many of whom appear only for a moment, never to reappear in the text, and are at best incidental to the central story of Franz's life. This stream of urban dwellers contributes to a sense of flux in the city:

Four persons have just gotten on No. 4 at Lothringer Strasse, two elderly women, a plain man with a worried look, and a boy with a cap and ear-muffs. The two women are together, they are Frau Plück and Frau Hoppe. They want to get an abdominal bandage for Frau Hoppe[. . .]. The boy, Max Rüst, will later on become a tinker, father of seven more Rüst[s]. At the age of 52 he will win a quarter of a prize in the Prussian Class Lottery, then he will retire from business and die [. . .] at the age of 55. His obituary will read as follows (55-6).

In addition to the arbitrary relation of these tram travel vignettes to the central story, the purpose of their own content is unclear. Later in the novel, another narrator says of tram travellers "Who could find out what is happening inside them, a tremendous chapter. And if anyone did write it, to whose advantage would it be?" (221). Shortly afterwards, reflecting the newspaper interests in tram travel at this time, the narrator refers to the mysterious long tickets of such travel:

Line 12 Siemenstrasse D A [. . .] mysterious tokens, who can solve them, who can guess and who confess them [. . .] the scraps of paper are punched four times at certain places, and on them there is written the same German in which the Bible and the Criminal Code are written: Valid till the end of the line, by the shortest route, connection with other lines not guaranteed. They read newspapers of various tendencies, conserve their balance by means of the semicircular canals of their internal ear, inhale oxygen, stare stupidly at each other, have pains, or no pains, think, don't think, are happy, unhappy, are neither happy nor unhappy (221-2).

From making use of the tram as a means of introducing compact stories that are reminiscent of news-in-brief clippings, the text moves to consider the interest inherent in tram travel for the newspaper or textual form. The tickets, as Fritzsche suggests above, are of interest, scraps denoting routes and regulations, although in this instance there is no consideration of how they are held by the various travellers. Newspapers themselves appear, reinforcing the link between travel and journalism. A scientific investigation of tram travellers and their literal orientation in terms of balance becomes a mock article as the variation of these people and their emotions are seen as at once too varied to be fully captured by the newspaper, and pointless to capture at all.

Elsewhere, the pasting of newspapers, tram tickets and timetables into the narrative is supplemented by other instances of collage. One and a half pages are given over to a representation of Berlin's public services via icons and headings. The city crest sits at the top of this visual insert, while "Street Cleaning and Transport" and "Trade and Commerce" (50) are listed beneath. This is the most visually distinctive inserted fragment in the text, and serves to denote Franz's transition from Tegel-dwelling convict to man of the Berlin streets. When Franz celebrates his release from prison into city life by hiring a prostitute, her own language echoes this process of pasting, in which language from another register invades either speech or text. She offers him a drink by saying "Come on, big man, take another glass. I'd walk a mile for Mampe's brandy, it makes you feel so hale and dandy" (35). This slip into the advertising strap line turns the domestic offer of a drink into an extension of the pecuniary relationship they have already established, an extension that is confirmed when it becomes clear that she will be charging for the drink. She is also a frequent singer of music-hall songs, connecting herself explicitly with commercial entertainment. Later, Franz again gives in to the lure of drink as commodity, when brandy and beer are personified and calling to him to consume. As he drinks the alcohol, he internalises the commercial language: "Franz pours it down his throat. I believe it. Everything, darling, everything you say, I believe, you're me lambkin, we'll go into the green pastures together" (324). The reference to religious rhetoric implicit in "I believe," "lambkin" and "green pastures" refigures this process of consumption as a kind of commercial communion.

The narrative itself slips into the language of the commercial in such instances as when stating "down Prenzlauer Strasse, the distillery, textile factories, candy, silk, silk, I recommend silk, something amazingly smart for the well-built woman!" (228). This slip into the commercial occurs at some unusual junctures, and in one instance is juxtaposed with musing on destiny: "But with destiny's mighty power there's no union that can flower. And fate moves with giant strides. If you have difficulty in walking, wear Leiser's shoes, Leiser's is the biggest shoe-store on the square" (259). Juxtaposing the rhetorical with the day-to-day, the incident perhaps parallels Franz's religious consumption of alcohol: commerce is invading every element of contemporary life. The inclusion of these fragments lends to the various narrative voices, or to the narrative as a whole to which these contribute, a feeling of provisionality that echoes that of the newspaper. The narrative voices are opinionated, playful and unreliable, just like the newspaper headlines and adverts that continually invade or displace them. This unreliability is highlighted in one further peculiar slippage of narrative voice:

From the south the Rosenthaler Strasse runs into the square. Across the way Aschinger provides food as well as beer to drink, music, and wholesale bakery. Fish are nutritious, some are happy when they have fish, and others are unable to eat it, eat more fish, the healthy slenderizing dish. Ladies stockings, genuine artificial silk, here you have a fountain pen with a 14-carat gold point (55).

From a voice offering narrative exposition, and geographical orientation, the narrative moves towards sales jingles, the spurious claim of “genuine artificial silk,” and ultimately the tone of a salesman. By pasting the commercial language of newspapers and advertisements into the speech of his characters and the claims of his narrators, Döblin problematises the possibility of a narrative that will truly orientate the reader by offering a stable, univocal truth.

When Franz decides to become a newspaper vendor, he does so after a conversation with a newsstand owner operating in Invalidenstrasse. The owner is having problems making the business viable, due to the potential of the newspaper front page to allow visual consumption without paying: “At the corner of the Chausseestrasse there is a news-stand in the hallway, a few people are standing there, gabbling and chattering. ‘Hey, don’t stand around here.’ ‘Can’t a man look at the pictures?’ ‘Why don’t you buy ‘em? Don’t block the passage-way’” (73). The front page of the hanging newspapers arrest the attention of the pedestrian population, just as they were designed to do. However, problems arise, both economically for the vendor and functionally for the street as a space of passage, if these commodities are not bought, but merely consumed in the manner facilitated by their appealing lay-out. Symon, visiting the Daily Telegraph offices in 1914, discusses the Free Department, the section of the office dealing with newspaper contents bills. The possibilities of these contents bills are similar to the front pages of the Berlin newsstand: “What one bill does not give another will, and the ingenious reader of an array of contents bills can get a pretty fair idea of what is happening without referring to a newspaper at all” (Symon 36). Clearly the Berliners are attempting a parallel strategy, focusing on the possibility of a newspaper read for free. The newsstand owner in fact claims that “There was a guy once, asked me for a chair so he could read in comfort” (Döblin 74). This reading of newspapers in a stationary position in a public space is inappropriate, as demonstrated by the connection throughout the text between travel and the newspaper reading experience. In fact, when Franz finally makes the decision to become a vendor, this decision is itself based on the relation between the newspaper and movement: “In the company of sloppy Lina he observes the street life between the Alex and Rosenthaler Platz and decides to sell newspapers. Why? They

had told him all about it. Lina could lend a hand, and it's just the thing for him. Moving to, moving fro, roundabout and away we go" (79). The visual consumption that the non-purchasers of the newspapers undertake when they fail to keep moving is shown to be a cause for concern when Franz speaks to a seller of pornographic papers and magazines. Franz wants to share his feelings on the matter with the seller, saying "I just want to tell you, looking at pictures is no good. [. . .] It does a man harm, yes, sir, that botches you up. You start by looking at pictures and afterwards, when you want to, there you are, and it won't go naturally any more" (82-3). The problematic nature of visual consumption is here tied to the "unnatural," a connection underscored when Franz takes away some homosexually pornographic material. He finds this so disturbing that he is prompted to show it to his girlfriend Lina in a kind of experimental exploration of the impact of the visual. Lina "claps her hand over her mouth. [. . .] then she takes the whole package of papers from the table and throws it down on the bench" (86-7).

The pornographer explains the advantages of selling his type of material, advantages that stem from the absence of economies of display on the covers of the papers and magazines themselves. There is only limited browsing at the stall, and for a full exploration of the papers there must be, first, purchase, and thence a private moment of visual consumption. As the stall owner says, "When anybody takes a paper from me, he buys it and he keeps it" (84). This redirection of visual consumption to the private sphere keeps the pedestrian flow in action past the newsstand, but the possibility of unnaturalness arising from visual contamination is increased by private contemplation of this material. The reader is subsequently allowed a glimpse of this homosexual "pornography," as the novel temporarily becomes Franz's experience of reading the bundle of newspapers and magazines. The pictures, which the seller has claimed are the only part of interest to the consumer (84-5), are absent, and instead Franz reads a range of reports, editorials and fantastical stories. Juxtaposed are a love story, details of a criminal investigation, a report on a partial gender transformation, and a fairy story with a lesbian subtext. These fragments of Franz's reading highlight the fact that the pornographer is also selling political material dealing with gay rights issues.

The strange combination of the sections on which Franz's eye alights is demonstrated as a textual rather than a sexual experience as punctuation invades the stories in Franz's consciousness: "But she did not move, comma, she did not pull the coverlet closer over herself [. . .] her lips trembled, colon, quotation marks, Eleanore, dash, Eleanore, dash, quotation marks,



quotation francs, quotation dollars – going, going, gone!” (89-90). As his reading progresses, Franz’s mind turns to the saleability of this material. Just as the material reality of the newspaper form asserts itself in what is essentially a fairy tale, so the commercial appears in this incongruous context by virtue of the interpretations of Franz’s consciousness, oriented as he is at this time towards becoming a seller of these wares himself. After a brief spell as a tie salesman, Franz returns to the newspaper trade and “He has his stand at the Alexanderstrasse subway exit, opposite the Ufa movie-house, on the same side where Fromm, the optician, has built a new business” (223). This new site is one explicitly connected to sight, via the cinema and the optician’s premises, emphasising once more the importance of visual display. In addition, the selection of this spot is determined by the increased pedestrian traffic suggested by the presence of the subway exit. Throughout his own involvement in newspaper sales, Franz has illustrated the connection between the commercial paper, visual consumption, and an experience of transience through travel.

When Franz’s girlfriend Mieke is killed, her death is figured as a kind of fragmentation into text and reportage. First, the tone of an obituary overtakes the narrative voice, letting the reader know that “She was the daughter of a street-car conductor from Bernau. There were three children in the family” (526). Later, her life is further fragmented when the narrator explains that “now she’s only a case for criminal inquiry, a technical process, just as when a telephone wire is laid, that’s what she has come to. They take her death-mask, paint everything in natural colours, it’s an exact likeness, in a kind of celluloid. So there is Mieke, her face and throat are in a cupboard filled with legal documents” (526-7). Aside from her association with text and documentation, Mieke is a victim of contemporary technologies including the press, but also photography or the cinema, implied by “celluloid,” and the telephone wires. Her fragmentation through these technologies is made explicit at the conclusion of the episode: “She is displayed under glass now, face smashed, heart smashed, abdomen smashed, her smile smashed” (527). When Mieke becomes a newspaper report, she becomes *only* that, and the physical reality of her actual murder at the hands of Reinhold is bypassed: “Eva cries and weeps upon the table, the paper with ‘Murder’ on it still lying on the table. Mieke is murdered, nobody did anything, it just happened to her” (537). Not only her life, but also her death, is stolen from her by a textual technology that turns murder into a saleable, or sale-driving, commodity. Earlier in the novel, two construction workers are described as laughing over the BZ when reading about a suicide note: “That’s a sad case, if you was to see a thing like that in the theater [ . . . ] it’d make you

blubber!” (342). A strange shift has occurred here, where the newspaper’s quotidian status distances the newspaper reader from an emotional connection to its revelations, just as Mieke’s death has become *only* a newspaper story. The fictional, a book or a play, will in this context have a greater impact on the feelings, thus establishing a kind of reality now unavailable to the ubiquitous newspaper text. This again calls to mind Miriam Henderson’s realisation that the public text of the newspaper does not facilitate access to reality, only, rather, to words.

When Franz, wrongly accused of Mieke’s murder, finds himself the subject of newspaper stories, he too associates the experience with fragmentation, saying: “there’s a mill there, a quarry [. . .] no matter how I hold on, it’s no use, it wants to smash me to pieces, even if I am an iron girder, it wants to break me to pieces” (534). However, the process of gathering his thoughts, in this context an attempt to pull himself together, also requires an engagement with the media. Whereas the newspaper of the opening scene created a sense of disorientation in the newly-released Franz, the posters to which he now refers offer a sense of relative order. “I must go out and look at the poster column, I’ve gotta see it. I’ve gotta read it in the saloon, in the papers, the stuff they write, how it happened” (534-5). In his distress, he will trust the newspaper reports, and allow them to displace reality; they have become the arbiters of the real, and as such take precedence over the evidence of his senses. Ultimately, his loose grip on reality results in his incarceration in the Buch institute for the mentally ill. When released, he again turns to the newspaper for orientation: “He sits in a café on Brunnenstrasse and picks up a paper. Wonder if my name’s in here [. . .]. Nothing. Nothing. Where shall I go?” (624-5).

Berlin Alexanderplatz is a novel peculiarly concerned with the circulations, juxtapositions and interpretations of a series of transient texts, as they pass through contemporary Berlin, and thus through the novel itself. It is also concerned with the experiences of buying and reading quotidian texts in all their variety. The novel itself, with its division via headlines and saturation with “borrowed” text, suggests that a singular reading of the city of Berlin is impossible, and that to trust a text, to allow it to so closely represent truth as to *become* that truth, is problematic. Like Miriam’s mother, the inhabitants of Berlin must learn how to read the newspaper, to manage the word city as a prelude to managing the city itself. The claim to veracity at the end of Döblin’s novel must, the reader presumes, be taken as a joke: “All I have reported in this book, *Alexanderplatz, Berlin*, about Franz Biberkopf’s fate is true [. . .] it contains a truth which can be grasped” (576). There is truth here, but it is one that is relative to other texts, and other truths,

and which can only be grasped when these are considered in close spatial relation to one another. The possibility of a stable truth beyond the text to which it can refer becomes questionable both for Döblin and for the newspaper readers he dramatises. The *papiers collés* troubled the notion of a sacrosanct canvas free from commercial or textual taint, and thus questioned the role of the commodity in contemporary life. Döblin's text finds a complex interweaving of textual and lived reality, mediated by the key text of the popular urban newspaper, itself representative of the commercialisation of language, history, even fate and religion.

Fritzsche reports that "Emphasizing the movement, contrast and transitoriness of the urban inventory, the newspaper moved away from a textual or narrative organization of reality and constructed a visual or tactile encounter with it" ("Readers, Browsers" 97). This project of the contemporary newspaper of Berlin finds a correlate in Döblin's text, as the experience of reading Berlin Alexanderplatz becomes an experience of navigating the word city of Berlin, in all its multiple visual and textual forms, as it proliferates a variety of truths. Fritzsche notes that "accumulating [. . .] such an array of stories, predictions, asides, and statistical data, and re-editing the city with each new edition, turn-of-the century newspapers formally anticipated the structure and design of *Berlin Alexanderplatz*," and further that "the manuscript copy of the novel reveals that Döblin wrote and pasted at the same time" ("Readers, Browsers" 95). A similarity can be identified here between Döblin's compositional practice and the *papiers collés* work of Picasso and Braque. A further similarity has been suggested between these two artistic endeavours and the editorial labour of the contemporary newspaper. However, these constructional principles are perhaps less significant than the implication inherent in all three forms: the serious difficulty of capturing the experience of urban life in the early twentieth century in a single, ordered narrative which makes claims to verisimilitude.

If the newspaper can be understood as the textual form most representative of this period (and its ubiquity, constant permutations and truly quotidian status suggest that it can), it must be understood as an interactive text that both responded to and generated the particular urban experience of the period. When co-opted by the cultural forms of art and literature, its transformative and malleable possibilities as a vector of commercialism do not cease; rather they help those cultural forms themselves to generate an interrogative relationship with their contemporary environment. Such an interrogation involves, for Richardson, questions regarding the gendered nature of public discourse. At a metaphorical level, Miriam Henderson aspires to

accede to a public, patriarchal space – a space represented by the Standard. For Conrad, the newspaper's impact is felt on a textual level, with the particular verbal formulations of journalism breaking beyond the bounds of punctuation and infecting his literary discourse. This infection parallels the fate of Comrade Ossipon, whose psychological or mental space is haunted by newspaper clippings. In Döblin the peculiar spatial habits of the newspaper are most consciously foregrounded. The literal, geographical space of Franz's Berlin is littered with newspapers and their advertisements. This reflects the need of the contemporary city dweller to reach for the newspaper as a guide to urban life. Taking on the newspaper as a structural principle, just as Picasso and Braque were to do in their *papiers collés* works, Döblin allows his own text to become just such an urban guide. Further, through his understanding of lay-out design and visual impact, and through marshalling many anonymous voices, Döblin becomes a Picasso-esque editor, creating a word city that echoes the spatial arrangements of the newspaper itself. The newspaper of the early twentieth century has two key connections to space: a newly radicalised textual lay-out, and a capacity for extremely wide geographical dispersion on the day of its publication.<sup>14</sup> At root, both of these concrete spatial connections are motivated by economics – an advertising industry's drive toward greater visual impact, and a newspaper industry's determination to achieve increased circulation. Placing such commerce-driven spatialities in the context of high modernist art and literature will inevitably be a catalyst for spatial exploration within those works at both a concrete and a metaphoric level.

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<sup>14</sup> Changes to the way that news was gathered from around the globe are also significant, effectively shrinking the geographical spaces across which news could be drawn. Alfred Harmsworth of the Daily Mail, for example, made "unprecedented" use of cabled news. See Startt.

## Chapter Four

### Advertisements

#### James Joyce's Word-City

The search for meaning in James Joyce's Ulysses has proved a challenge for a seemingly endless list of critics, and yet Fredric Jameson suggests that many of these efforts have been sadly misguided. Writing of the tendency to adopt a mythical, psychoanalytical or ethical reading of the text, Jameson claims that "Genuine interpretation is something other than this, and involves the radical historicisation of the form itself: what is to be interpreted is then the historical necessity for this very peculiar and complex textual structure or reading operation in the first place" ("Ulysses" 128). Jameson's statement functions as a call-to-arms for those analysing Ulysses, encouraging them to eschew the hunt for Homeric parallels or the unraveling of the father-son relationship in favour of illuminating the historical specificity and necessity of the form of the text. When Jameson begins this attempt at a historically contextualised understanding of form, he notes that author, reader and character as we know these functional elements disappear from the novel. In the absence of these, "only a form of material unity is left, namely the printed book itself, and its material unity as a bound set of pages" (Jameson, "Ulysses" 136). When the author and reader are excised from the text the material textuality of the book is what remains, as a final focus for analysis. By focusing attention on the material form of the text, Jameson also highlights the nature of the text as commodity. Ulysses may be seen as a dramatisation of the commodification of text, one that exposes the economic drive behind the peculiar textual forms of the modernist period. In order to effect this dramatisation, Joyce incorporates two key forms of text within his own: newspapers and advertisements. These two textual forms can be seen to represent the interconnection between text (or textual commodity) and economics. This interconnection is played out in peculiar spatial distributions of text. If Jameson's plea for an interpretative method of historical specificity is to be answered, it seems that several shifts will need to be considered: the economic developments of capitalist modernity, the possibility of the text as commodity, and the spatial distributions of text that come to bear on the concrete space of the material text at this time.

Chapter three looked at the work of Fritzsche, who suggests that, in the modernist period, "the city as place and the city as text defined each other in mutually constitutive ways" (Berlin



1). He claims that ways of reading and writing undergo change in this period, and that “these representational acts, in turn, constructed a second-hand metropolis which gave a narrative to the concrete one and choreographed its encounters” (1). Speaking largely of Berlin in the first years of the twentieth century, and focusing on the burgeoning newspaper industry in the city, Fritzsche implies that texts such as the newspaper help to make concrete or to formulate urban experience in modernity, but they also act as a guide to the appropriate practices of urban life. While the last chapter used Fritzsche’s characterisation of the modernist newspaper to better understand Berlin Alexanderplatz, this chapter seeks to take these ideas further, looking more broadly at the newspaper – city relationship. The newspaper form must be malleable, both reflective of, or responsive to, quotidian urban experience, and creative in its guiding of that experience. This function of newspapers as guides to modern life is returned to repeatedly by Fritzsche, who claims that “they calibrated readers to its [the city’s] tremulous, machine-tempered rhythms” (16), “they trained readers how to move through streets and crowds in addition to guiding them among sensational sights” (16), and they “calibrated readers to the operations of commodity culture” (26). To read the newspapers of urban modernity was thus at once to see urban experience contained and represented in an increasingly innovative manner, and to have your subsequent experiences of the city guided. Just as an economic drive can be seen to alter the form of texts in the period, so the practices prompted by the guide-texts of the newspapers also required city dwellers to participate in processes of consumption.

Fritzsche thus characterises modernist Berlin as a “word city,” because within it streams of text “fashioned the nature of metropolitan experience” (1). The perception of the newspaper as recorder of recent events is in this way reconfigured as the form is seen as one reflective of days past, and one with the power to prompt the behaviours or events of days to come. This prompting function clusters around essentially economic imperatives. The newspaper’s suggestions to the city dweller were almost exclusively pecuniary at root. Both newspaper text and advertisements announced products for sale in various areas of the city, considered the merits of the latest innovations, or suggested leisure time experiences that would support the developing tourist industry. The newspaper, in recording contemporary urban experience, was inevitably recording the experience of a consumer economy in action. This economic development toward a commodity culture characterises urban experience in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, in Berlin and beyond. Such a development results in a changing urban fabric and a changing textual representation. If the newspaper is the modernist city’s

representational text, then it is one characterised by instability, and motivated by an economic drive. Thus, for Fritzsche, “the word city should be regarded as a social text that simultaneously reflected, distorted, and reconstituted the city” (10).

This scriptive act of reconstitution was not, however, *prescriptive*. The word city was heteroglot, open to a variety of readings, just as the concrete text of city space itself held a multitude of possibilities (indeed, it is this range of possibilities that necessitates the newspaper’s function as guide). The newspaper sought to stabilise the many potential readings of its textual fragments, to guide the reader through its internal spatial logic, by employing a range of structural devices. “Headlines, columns, subheads, succinct narration, and other typographical elements created protocols of reading,” claims Fritzsche (48). This tension between guiding function and the proliferation of options for practice occurs within the spatial economy of the newspaper itself, and within the concrete spaces of the city. As Fritzsche puts it, “the word city could be rummaged in diverse ways” (49). This complex and mutually constitutive relationship between the experience of city space in urban modernity, and the experience of newspaper readership, is the ultimate purpose of Fritzsche’s formulation of the notion of the word city. Far from playing out urban experience in a secondary reflective realm, the urban newspaper maintained an interactive relationship with the urban environment. The ordering of the newspaper’s own spatial economy reflected the ambivalent role of the newspaper as reporter of and guide to urban practice. This spatial economy, the distribution and function of textual elements within the body of the newspaper, dramatised the contemporary economics of space, as shall be seen. The newspaper’s role as a commodity is an issue here, just as Jameson’s focus on historically contextualised form brings about a focus on the (commodified) materiality of Joyce’s text.

Moving beyond the word city characterised by Fritzsche’s description of textual flows in modernist Berlin, the concept of the word-city is reached. By hyphenating the terms “word” and “city” it becomes possible to understand that they, or rather their correlates of “text” and (concrete) “space,” can be seen to interact in a multitude of complex ways, with a mutual root in the developing capitalism of urban modernity. The commodity culture of capitalist modernity seeks to impose or encourage consumer desire, but its spatialised textual manifestations, formulated by the increasingly strategic newspaper and advertising industries, can be re-read so as to illuminate the structures of their operation in inculcating such desire. The reordering of the

spatial economies of these textual products of a commodity culture is both played out and brought under scrutiny in a number of modernist literary texts. Joyce makes, in *Ulysses*, one of the most playful and complex attempts to illuminate these economies, seemingly poised between celebration of and anxiety about these new forces. It is economics that is the ordering principle behind new forms of textuality, whether they are the “high” forms of literary avant-gardism, or the “low” forms of ad language or journalese. Indeed, as the *papiers collés* works of Picasso and Braque had demonstrated by the time of Joyce’s writing, these distinctions between high and low were being contravened in formally and conceptually dramatic ways. For these artists, as for Joyce, it was commerce that brought art and non-art into a mutually interrogative relationship at this time. To answer Jameson’s plea for historical specificity in looking at the materiality of form, is to read *Ulysses* as an instance of formal experimentation that sees the materialism of commodity culture as its driving force.

The modernist city is, then, as Fritzsche’s characterisation of Berlin makes clear, a concrete and ideological space increasingly governed by textual economies. It is also a space in which text and economics are mutually reinforcing. This may be seen in terms of the practical role of the incitement to consume present in newspapers and advertisements, and the formal and typographical innovations used to increase the facility of that incitement. It may also be seen in terms of the impositions of a consumer economy upon spatial practice in the city. At the quotidian level of the appeals of advertisements and newspapers, capitalism deploys both space and text in a variety of ways in order to control the practice of the contemporary city dweller. The immersion of the modernist subject in the word-city is at once an immersion into a textual nexus of which he/she is always the created subject, and an entrance into the possibility of a resistant reading of space/text, or a textual self-constitution. *Ulysses*, by positing the commercial force of the word-city, by establishing a textual architecture that demonstrates capitalism’s domination of city space, illustrates the prescriptive problematics of contemporary living. However, by allowing Leopold Bloom the faculty of a readerly peripateticism, the novel also illustrates the possibility of a re-reading of even the most determined prescriptions of commercial urban space. Joyce transcribes the long poem of Bloom’s walking. For Michel de Certeau, “To walk is to lack a place. It is the indefinite process of being absent and in search of a proper” (De Certeau 103). An amelioration of placelessness and negotiation of identity is the labour that Bloom undertakes in his walking, a labour that brings him up against not only the textual space of Dublin’s physical reality, but the spatialised texts of its economic development.

Bloom's poem of passage is a wandering one, an often aimless stroll of personal significance that incorporates the imposed text of the known sites and names of the city of Dublin. Bloom is a dissident walker and reader, renegotiating urban space according to his own personal path, and re-reading the spatialised texts of commodity culture according to his own personal response. Joyce creates a theatre in which texts, readings and re-readings clash, combine and reconfigure. This is a dramatisation of a form of spatio-textual battle that can be seen as the very heart of the urban experience in modernity.

### **The Spatialised Texts of the Press**

Richard Terdiman has suggested that:

Since the early nineteenth century, newspapers have seemed to *go without saying*. What they speak has become so deeply internalized within us that the origins of their utterance, and of the practices of reading and perception they have taught us, appear diffused through the social formation – without any specific locus, transhistorical, attributable to no one. [. . .] they and their discursive patterns have become essential to our modern construction of the world. Indeed, at times the 'world' and the 'news' might almost seem to have merged for us (Terdiman 118).

Thus Terdiman asserts that the peculiarly spatialised discourse of the newspaper required new forms of reading, new levels of visual and conceptual facility. The later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were therefore a period of consolidation for these new practices, and their cultural assimilation as normative modes of seeing. The modernist protagonist comes to *think* as newspapers write, and this textualisation of perception in the world means that events occurring within that world and the textual means of their representation and dissemination become one. The newspaper is in this way a key element in the construction of consciousness in modernity. This is a role facilitated by fundamental changes brought about in the nineteenth century by forward-thinking publishers such as Emile de Girardin and Moïse Millaud. As Terdiman explains:

The innovations they brought about radically reconceived the cultural range and the internal space of the daily paper. [. . .] They turned the daily into a commodity in terms of both its means of circulation and its content. As they recast and reorganized it, the newspaper was adapted to the implicit needs of commerce. It *became* the institutional incarnation of the dominant discourse for which I argued it could be taken – and indeed was taken – as a characteristic figure (129).

This dominant discourse is that of commodity capitalism. In its connection to routine, to the quotidian and the commercial, Terdiman sees the newspaper as “a characteristic metonym for modern life itself” (120), one which is “devised to represent the pattern of variation without change, the repetitiveness, autonomization, and commodification which [. . .] have marked fundamental patterns of our social existence” (120). In this way, Terdiman seems to suggest that the newspaper should be considered as a literally textual expression of the De Certeauan panorama-view of contemporary capitalism. Yet, as Fritzsche’s characterisation of the newspaper as a heteroglot entity makes clear, there are possible spaces for dissident readings within the economically motivated, and motivating, spatiality of the newspaper form.

Terdiman goes on to suggest that the newspaper be considered as the first instance of a consumer commodity, “made to be perishable, purchased to be thrown away” (120). As the embodiment of the newly consolidated commodity culture of the late nineteenth century, the newspaper operates to encourage the very socioeconomic behaviours of which it is itself symptomatic: “In selling a transformed perception of its culture, it sold itself first of all” (Terdiman 120). The training in new processes of reading or textual consumption that was part and parcel of the newspaper’s operation as guide to processes of consumption in the city at large, centred around structural development. As Terdiman puts it, “Newspapers trained their readers in the apprehension of detached, independent, reified, decontextualized ‘articles,’” the ambiguity of that term conjuring up an “element of newspaper format,” but also an “element of commercial transaction” (122). This inculcation of the contemporary newspaper consumer into the signficatory systems of text with specific spatial structuration was therefore a culturo-economic imperative, facilitating as it did further acts of consumption. The logic of newspaper lay-out is, then, inherently commercial, with the structuration required by the economically functional role of the form expressed in terms of an article-based juxtaposition. This structure acts as a guide to reading and attempts to manipulate the perceptions of the reader, whilst also leaving open the possibility of a wandering path for the eye over the page. This may perhaps be compared to the attempts to guide praxis on the part of the urban planner, which are to an extent open to being reinterpreted or undermined by the micro-textual readings of city space by the walker on the street. Joyce places the ocular reading of newspapers and advertisements alongside the walking/reading of Dublin’s streets in a complex conjunction through the figure of Leopold Bloom.



The revolution of newspaper style to at once embrace and facilitate commodity culture results in stylistic descriptions that may also be applied to Ulysses. Thus when Terdiman describes the newspaper as an “anti-organicist mode of modern discursive construction,” and declares that “Its form denies form, overturns the consecrated canons of text structure and coherence which had operated in the period preceding its inception” (122), the text of Ulysses is also conjured up. “Aeolus,” the seventh episode of Ulysses, set in the newspaper offices and print rooms, is a section of text that allows the fragments or articles of which it is comprised to intermingle. As well as illustrating in the broadest terms the implications of the newspaper form in modernity (ways of reading, commodified processes of reception), the episode also makes clear the insidious malleability of newsprint by which this importance is facilitated. Implicit within “Aeolus” is an understanding of the newspaper itself as an entity whose internal boundaries are repeatedly transgressed. A limber textuality and a commodification of all journalistic textual material, however objective in presentation and tone, are at the root of these transgressions. It is the imperatives of advertising within the newspaper format that function to collapse the distinctions between “news” and “sales” items by their illumination of newspaper space as, at root, *always already for sale*. As Terdiman explains, newspaper structure ostensibly operates as “a metalanguage orienting readers concerning the *kind* of utterance confronting them,” i.e. news or advertisement, and “This mode was presumed to establish [. . .] the quotient of ‘objectivity’ attributable to it, and thereby the attitude with which it might be taken up by the reader” (122).

However, Terdiman suggests that within the French newspaper trade of the late nineteenth century, such distinctions broke down under the increasing commercialisation of the expanding press and that, as a result, conventions of orientation did not so much lead as *mislead* readers. The notion of space within the newspaper as purchasable by advertisers fundamentally affected the attitudes of advertising clients, advertisers themselves and newspaper writers, editors and managers towards the space held within their publications. This salability of space leaked, conceptually, into all articles, all elements that went to construct the daily read. Once space is for sale in this way, orientation as to objectivity or subjectivity of the textual voice becomes a practical impossibility for the reader. The newspaper is ostensibly a guide to contemporary commercial citizenship within the urban space. However, its sublimation of the commercial imperative in the ordering of its own internal spatiality, to be covered by a structure that suggests

objectivity in areas beyond the bounds of ads, masks the commercial nature of elements of the reading experience.

Terdiman has identified a particular spatial practice at work within the French newspaper trade in the years following 1836, after the initial developments in the production of mass-circulation daily newspapers. Known only within the trade, and a mystery to the reader of the dailies, a system of zoning was at work. The zoning process categorised all material within the newspaper within four types, determining their spatial placing within the lay-out of the paper, and indicating the level of conspicuousness in their invitation to purchase. As Terdiman has it, this codification of textual material “annulled in secret the public code which ostensibly determined the position within the paper of the different modes of discourse which composed it” (123). The spatialised reading experience still, for the daily consumer, ordered reception by suggesting that advertisements, news items and editorials were distinct elements, with distinct motivations: to sell and inform, to inform only, to offer commentary as expressed by an individual, respectively. However, from the point of view of those writing and shaping the newspaper, and selling its space, another system was at work that saw these expectations of objectivity and subjectivity repeatedly transgressed or transformed in the name of selling.

The four kinds of saleable space include the “English” advertisement or *annonce*, a textual element with an explicitly commercial intent, presented in columns, originally on the back pages of French dailies, and looking something like today’s classified advertisements (Terdiman 123-4). In addition there was the *réclame*, costing considerably more than the *annonce*, with the potential for more innovative appeals via display typography. More expensive still was the paid “fait divers” item, appearing in the early pages of the newspaper and pretending to offer an item of information to the reader, although ultimately recommending a purchase of some sort. Terdiman describes this as “surreptitious paid publicity, the most frankly deceptive presentation of text in the arsenal of modes available” (124). Finally, “editorial publicity” was available, on the front page, and fully disguising the subjective, and financially rewarded, nature of its opinions (124). The impact of this four-part system for the sale of newspaper space induced, within the press itself, “a generalized cynicism concerning the interchangeability of facts, opinions and money” (124). By the time of Joyce’s writing, and indeed the time at which he chooses to set *Ulysses*, this cynicism has become a major factor of contemporary textual consumption. However, it should perhaps be noted that typographic developments, enabled by

improvements in printing technology, offered the twentieth century reader further signposts to the nature of the text confronting them, unavailable in the undifferentiated typography of nineteenth century French dailies. The perils of remaining uncynical as to the claims of journalistic text are far-reaching, and dramatised most extensively through the figure of Gerty MacDowell in the “Nausicaa” episode, further discussed below.

“Aeolus” partakes of the normalisation of fragmentation in the reading experience, which in the newspaper was primarily brought about by economic drives. It could be suggested that the fragmented form of the newspaper reflects the daily experience of contemporary urban life, a life lacking coherence, filled with a myriad of sense impressions for which past experience cannot offer an explanation. However, it is perhaps more helpful in this context to consider the ways in which the newspaper’s fragmentation reflects economic developments toward the facilitation of a true commodity culture, a development that also comes to structure lived experience in a similar way. Thus both contemporary urban life and the daily newspaper are ordered according to a particular, new form of pecuniary logic. It is this common root in commodity-based commerce that gives both urban life and the newspaper their mirroring form, and enables them to enter into the mutually constitutive relationship that Fritzsche identifies above. With this in mind, it is possible to see that Joyce employs the newspaper within the “Aeolus” episode in order to deal with the panoramic textual nature of the twentieth century city in a De Certeauan sense, and the spatialised nature of the twentieth century newspaper. The spatial economy of the city or newspaper (or advertisement) takes on a new meaning, being at root economic, and thus concerned not only with the distribution of space, but the distribution of goods.

The episode is the most typographically distinctive of the novel, with headlines in capitals breaking up the text, and extensive use of italics. In a newspaper these typographic or structural strategies called attention to the content expected in the subsequent text, in a sense functioning as advertisements for the information contained within the newspaper’s pages, and thus as a prompt to purchase by the potential reader. Joyce does away with the descriptive capacities of his headlines, as throughout the episode he increasingly comes to contravene the relationship between the headline and the text that follows. These structural elements become ambiguous, moving from the locational, to announcing arrival, describing the basic moves of the scene in a manner reminiscent of stage directions, operating as abstracted fragments of a wider text never seen, or becoming involved in a dialogue with an imagined interlocutor. However, the first

headline, "IN THE HEART OF THE HIBERNIAN METROPOLIS" (*Ulysses* 147), does function to orientate the reader of the text, in its explicit reference to location. It also gestures toward the concern driving the tendency toward the manipulation of typography as a form of advertisement: the circulation of the newspaper. The heart functions as an oblique reference to the circulation of blood around the human body, whilst back in the urban realm this location is also a central node of tram travel. The tram connects bodily and textual circulation, as it enables the movement of both people and their textual journey companions around the city. Text is also on the move inside "His Majesty's vermilion mailcars" (148). This concern with circulation highlights a second key way in which economics and space are linked for the newspaper text. As well as generating a spatial restructuring within the concrete form of the newspaper text, commercial concerns demanded increasing circulations from newspapers. This necessitated an ever-increasing spatial colonisation of the urban realm, as newspapers were designed to appeal to, and enabled to reach, a rapidly expanding audience. This concern is highlighted when Bloom speculates about William Brayden: "But will he save the circulation?" (150).

Just as the concern with circulation was gestured towards through the bodily heart, and the urban tram, so "Aeolus" is more broadly structured around a struggle between organic and mechanical metaphors and images, still largely connected to the exposition of the movement of newsprint. The seventh headline of the episode is "HOW A GREAT DAILY ORGAN IS TURNED OUT" (150), the "daily organ" phrase referring to the communicative function of the newspaper, as well as making use of a second key organic metaphor. The headline immediately follows a musing from Bloom about Patrick Dignam's decomposing body. The headline also refers to the newspaper as "turned out," which refers both to its production by the newspapermen, and its subsequent distribution through the streets. This centrifugal force is depicted in the episode in the form of the newsboys, who yell items of text as advertisement (183), and who transport the newspapers to prospective buyers. "A bevy of scampering newsboys rushed down the steps, scampering in all directions, yelling, their white papers fluttering" (184-5). However, Bloom also considers a secondary strand of circulation that occurs after the primary use of the newspaper has ceased, i.e. subsequent to the day of its publication. "What becomes of it after? O, wrap up meat, parcels: various uses, thousand and one things" (152). Bloom's first suggestion perhaps invokes his experience earlier in the day, when he is drawn to items of news and advertisement that he finds on the newspaper scraps being used in Dlugacz's butcher's shop.

There is thus a tension in this episode between the gathering of news and its dissemination, between composition (writing, type-setting) and decomposition (decay, waste, secondary usage), and between the mechanical and the bodily or organic. The latter is perhaps an inevitability in an office and print room scenario in which man and machine must cohabit and collaborate, and in which they are placed in a mutually dependent relationship. It is the machines that constitute the primary threat, and which take over the text at several points within the episode, Joyce's text enabling their production of newspaper text to be represented, as a "Thumping thump" (150) of mechanised labour. They are a malevolent presence, and it strikes Bloom that they would "Smash a man to atoms if they got him caught. Rule the world today" (150). It is this train of thought that leads Bloom to think of Dignam's decomposing body. Thus the spatial composition of the newspaper text that the machines facilitate can potentially lead to the atomisation of human existence, which is a kind of *decomposition* or death. Eventually the speech of the machines comes to dominate the temporality of Bloom's own utterances. "Slipping his words deftly into the pauses of the clanking" (153), he outlines to Mr. Nannetti the design of the ad he needs. The mechanisation of Bloom's speech patterns is balanced by the humanisation of mechanical rhythm when the machines speak: "Slit. Almost human the way it slit to call attention. Doing its level best to speak" (154). The machines' entry into Bloom's consciousness, and indeed Joyce's text, prefigures a potential that Bloom identifies for them to take over the creation of the text of the newspaper: "they'd clank on and on the same, print it over and over" (151). This is a process that, in its automated and autonomised repetition, would alienate the reader from the text, as the machines would "Monkeydoodle the whole thing" (151). The increasingly nonsensical headlines of "Aeolus," often irrelevant as guides to the texts that precede or follow them, operate as an illustration of this machine-controlled, monkey-doodled text, estranged from the reader.

Bloom's dream of his own textual control in the imagined editorship of a provincial newspaper leads him to a recognition of the central importance of the issues of display and visual impact in newspaper production. "The personal note M.A.P. Mainly all pictures. Shapely bathers on golden strand" (151). This reverie refers to both the mapping or orienting function of a newspaper with a high level of visual impact, and the sexual frisson often mobilised in the advertisement or illustration, prompting reverie in the reader. The bathers image to which Bloom refers recalls Blazes Boylan's song of the seaside girls, as well as prefiguring Bloom's arousal at



the sight of a highly objectified Gerty on the beach in the "Nausicaa" episode. Also referenced is the taste-driven design of contemporary newspapers, with papers pandering to the demand for display type and illustrations on the part of both their reading public and their advertising clients. This attempt to satisfy the desires of these two groups is essential to the achievement of a profitable circulation. Bloom makes this explicit when he claims that "It's the ads and side features sell a weekly not the stale news in the official gazette" (150-1). The news, which may be up to a week old in a weekly publication, is stale in terms of content, presentation and appeal compared to the freshness of a well-designed advertisement or feature. Again, the significance of visual appeal is referred to when Bloom expresses hope for the prominent display of the ad he has procured from Alexander Keyes, telling Nannetti "you'll give it a good place I know" (154).

The economically driven transgression of textual structure within the newspaper, as identified by Terdiman, is illustrated in the "Aeolus" episode. As well as a prominent position for the Keyes ad, Bloom requests "just a little par calling attention. You know the usual. High class licensed premises. Longfelt want. So on" (153). The importance of the Keyes premises will thus be announced as an item of news, and claimed as meeting an established demand or "Longfelt want," a classic tactic of advertising itself. This language is worn and familiar as Bloom's "So on" suggests, and the practice is "the usual," well-established within the trade. This request on the part of the advertiser is referred to by Bloom later in the episode, highlighting the relationship between pandering to the requests of advertisers, and the potential to keep that revenue stream open in the future. Bloom states: "he wants a par to call attention in the *Telegraph* too, the Saturday pink. [ . . . ] he practically promised he'd give the renewal. But he wants just a little puff" (185). This relationship between a well-worn language, textual presentation and economics is an issue picked up elsewhere in the episode by Professor MacHugh when he claims "I teach the blatant Latin language. I speak the tongue of a race the acme of whose mentality is the maxim: time is money" (169). This can be read as MacHugh's low opinion of the English language, tarnished by commercialism, but unable to admit this connection, to be "blatant" as Latin is in its connection to economics. Instead, he reveres the Greek vowels present in the headline that hovers above, the "KYRIE ELEISON!" (169), first section of the Catholic mass, although crucially not inviolable to linguistic transformation, as it later becomes "K.M.R.I.A.," or "kiss my royal Irish arse" (186). In deference to Bloom's preoccupations, Professor MacHugh refers to "The gentle art of advertisement" (171). There follows an unusual illustration of the artfulness, if not the art, inherent in the ad. Recalling

Ignatius Gallaher's plan, in 1882, to let the *New York World* know about the Phoenix Park murder, we are told that an advertisement came to stand in for the space of an entire city. The movements of that night are reconstructed through the passage of the eye over the ad, which was subsequently received and understood by the offices of the foreign newspaper. "Gave it to them on a hot plate, Myles Crawford said, the whole bloody history" (173). The ad comes to function as a correlate for the city space of Dublin, in effect colonising the whole of the city, and passing on illicit details of criminal activity as far afield as New York. The artful possibilities of the "art of advertisement" is thus demonstrated, with a contemporary ad for Bransome's coffee (173) standing in as an illustration.

Perhaps the most significant headline in the "Aeolus" episode is the one that proclaims "SUFFICIENT FOR THE DAY..." (175), itself anticipating the subsequent claim that "Sufficient for the day is the newspaper thereof" (176). This claim may be seen to refer to the perishability of this daily commodity, whose primary usefulness expires as the day of its publication ends, and whose secondary usefulness reduces it to a practical wrapping, with a purely material functionality. As Terdiman has suggested, the newspaper may be seen as the first true commodity, and "Aeolus" has made clear that it is also riddled with commodities internally, or rather operates as a vector for their commercial appeals. However, the phrase "Sufficient for the day" also contains the sense of the newspaper's nature as fit for the purposes of, or suited to the appetites of, the time of its composition. It is led by, and leads, both panders to and creates, the demands of the readership of 1904, and it is also *sufficient* in terms of being as much as that readership can cope with, carefully calibrated to the needs of modern life, to borrow Terdiman's phrasing. This statement of sufficiency or suitability, made by J.J. O'Molloy, follows the listing of several "low" publications of dubious origin, "the farthing press [. . .] the Bowery gutter sheet" (176). Guided by the appetites of a contemporary readership for whom, as Bloom has already considered, news is of little interest when compared to ads and features, the newspaper tends its spatial form and its contents in the direction of the gutter.

The only pause in the rapid, machine-tempo pace of the press offices comes when Lenehan yells a rhetorical "Silence!" (177), and the blank space of the page indicates that a real silence has descended in the formerly frenetic environment. It is then that a fragment appears that is removed from the journalistic timbre of much that has gone before. It may perhaps be thought of as Stephen Dedalus's voice undertaking a sort of literary pastiche. He is certainly the

silent observer of the scene throughout much of the action, and is therefore best placed to operate as narrator. He turns the episode as a whole into a romanticised history with a style and tone that seems displaced from the writing that precedes and follows it, although one which perhaps recalls the serialised romances of the gutter press: "I have often thought since on looking back over that strange time that it was that small act, trivial in itself, that striking of that match, that determined the whole aftercourse of both our lives" (177). It certainly demonstrates the flattening of affect that can occur when styles, tones, typographies and forms of subjective or objective appeal are juxtaposed in such a way that their value is relativised. This is the fate of text in the newspaper, just as it is the fate of Joyce's own newspaper-saturated text in "Aeolus."

It is worth pausing to consider Stephen, possible author of the foregoing gutter press extract. Alongside Bloom, Stephen is the most significant presence in the narrative of Ulysses, and yet his attitude to narrative differs sharply from Bloom's. Shari Benstock has suggested that Joyce's novel recreates Dublin "less by reporting actions than by reporting stories; it celebrates human action as an appropriate subject for art by transforming action into narrative" (Benstock 707). This means that characters within Ulysses are defined not only by the stories they tell, but also by their attitudes to narrative and rhetorical devices. Benstock notes that Bloom's story about the disreputable moneylender Reuben J. Dodd is taken over by Cunningham, who has become impatient with the way that Bloom has set out the story's parameters (Benstock 708). In contrast to this problematic relationship to story-telling on the part of Bloom, Stephen has inherited his father Simon's flair for the public spinning of a yarn. Stephen flits between this father figure of colloquial discourse, the gossip-laden tall tale of the public house, and the alternative father figure of Shakespeare, symbol of literary accomplishment. Stephen, with Simon and Shakespeare as forebears, is a keen story-teller, and his most significant moments of rhetorical display are the Parable of the Plums told in the newspaper office, and the story of Hamlet's ghost, told in the library. Bloom's comparative rhetorical ineptitude, demonstrated by his failed story about Dodd, is perhaps that which lends his consciousness the dynamic quality manifested on the page of the novel. Like the contemporary newspaper, his mind perceives and integrates multiple minor details of urban life. This magpie mind brings him close to the environment of Dublin and the narrative forms of its newspapers, advertisements and citizens. This proximity to alternative narratives enlivens Bloom's appearances on the page, and offers some compensation for his status as "garrulous but a stylistic outsider in a city of besotted skilled rhetoricians" (Bersani 157). Stephen's eloquence depends upon rhetorical control, and

while the city may prompt a story (as in the Parable of the Plums), the level of refinement he demands of his own story-telling is a technique of distance. Stephen's stories, as Benstock has it, "are notably self-conscious, critical of their own methods and motives, at some pains to transform real experience into an account of that experience" (710). It is this transformation of action into artfully controlled narrative that Benstock ascribes to Ulysses as a whole, and suggests is the condition of all human action transformed into art. The impenetrability of Stephen's rhetorical contrivances is, for Benstock, a sign of his intention to reserve his meaning for "the literati" (724), maintaining a power and authority in his authorship that reduces the collaborative element of the story-telling process (725). Benstock concludes that Stephen, as story-telling artist, is a practitioner primarily of mimesis (734). It seems that here Benstock intends to invoke both meanings of that term, imitation and artistic representation, and to see these two things as yoked together in Stephen's brand of story-telling. In this context, his pastiche of the farthing press, if indeed it is his, is at once an accurate imitation, and a scornful rehearsing of the kind of writing that is antithetical to his notion of great art, which is, crucially, tied to the works of Shakespeare.

Leo Bersani has suggested that Joyce's own mimetic effort in Ulysses begins by foregrounding the fictional nature of his many interwoven modes of narrative, subsequently implies a reality beyond the bounds of the text, upon which the mimetic effort is performed (167), and ultimately concludes that these quoted narrative forms are valuable precisely because of their status as fictions (170). Through the particular narrative strategy of bypassing the absolutely identifiable point of view, the novel "brings to the mimetic tradition in literature what may be its most refined technique" (161): the ability to present the purified essence of a point of view, "a whatness ontologically distinct from the phenomenality of having a point of view" (162). Such a whatness is related to quidditas or the radiant claritas of Aquinas, with which Stephen is preoccupied in the formulation of his aesthetic theory in A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man. This focus upon whatness, essence or being means that "The quotation of characters in their essential being, though it violates a certain literalism in realistic point of view, suggests that characters exist outside of their novelistic appearances" (Bersani 167). The suggestion of an existent reality upon which the novel undertakes its mimetic process does not, for Joyce, push the literary into a secondary position as mere fiction, since for Bersani "The novel has already committed itself to illusions of truth, that is, to a belief in novelistic language as epistemologically trustworthy, as capable of recreating the density of human experience, of

referring to or carrying more than its own relational play” (167). Stephen’s rhetorical efforts to control mimetic narrative, then, distance him from the social contract they imply, and leave him with an uneasy relationship to the art of either of his story-telling fathers. Joyce’s control of his mimetic effort in the construction of *Ulysses* leaves the fictional status of his borrowed forms of narrative in place, precisely because the fictional has already been validated as a possible pathway to truth. Bersani notes that “The very variety of stylistic designs in *Ulysses* reveals Joyce’s designs on culture. Far from transmuting all his cultural referents into a single, recognizably Joycean discourse, Joyce scrupulously maintains the distinctiveness of innumerable other styles” (170). It is, therefore, crucial to Joyce’s literary strategy in this novel to leave his borrowed narratives, rhetorical devices and scraps of texts distinct within the over all project. In the context of his own mimetic effort, all forms of narrative are of equivalent value.

### **Ads as Spatialised Text**

In the early twentieth century, then, the newspaper interacted with the commercialised space of the city, at the same time as undergoing an internal spatial transformation, itself driven by economic development. One of the primary contributors to the changing lay-out of the newspaper was an element whose relations to the pecuniary were explicit: the newspaper advertisement. The addition of advertisements, the increasing freedom of their spatial colonisation within the form of the newspaper, and their developing use of display typography and illustrations, were all symptomatic of a consolidating industry which was forming an increasingly close alignment with the press. The revenue gained from the sale of advertising space funded the expansion of press organisations, and aided the circulation of the newspapers. This increased circulation required new technological advances in printing, paper production and typographical design. Of course, the new capacities of the printers and typesetters facilitated ads with greater visual impact and appeal, and the increased circulation of the newspapers aided the advertisers in establishing a spatial colonisation, in the city and beyond, that saw them reach an ever-increasing audience of potential consumers. This complex interaction between the newspaper and advertising industries, driven by commercial impulses and new technological developments, made the reading experience in the first three decades of the twentieth century one radically different from that of the first half of the nineteenth century, with its relatively conservative press. Advertising’s development results in a three-fold significance for contemporary society. It functions as a “center of knowledge production” in its ostensibly



educative or informative role of letting consumers know about a product and its merits. It is a “determining economic site,” in that it is symptomatic of a shift in the nature and operation of capitalism toward a surplus of parity products, and it is a “representational system” (Wicke 1) with a peculiar relation between product, consumer and the representational means of their mediation.

Wareham Smith, in his 1932 memoirs recalling his time as Advertisement Director at Associated Newspapers Limited, notes that advertising is “a hardy plant – difficult to kill. It must kill the newspaper first” (Smith 247). Smith here makes clear the symbiotic relationship between the newspaper and its ad content. In looking back at the predominantly “classified”-format ads of the late nineteenth century British press, Smith suggests that their unimaginative form made them a poor investment for advertisers. He notes that “Most papers would not admit display or illustrated advertisements, and advertisers themselves objected to them. Great industries [. . .] either did not use the press, or else published their announcements in such an unattractive form that many of them obtained no profitable return” (28). Yet by the time of penning his memoirs, Smith was able to attribute a shift in the country’s economy to the presence of ads in a newspaper context: “What has determined this great change in the purchasing habits of our country? It is, in great measure, a change in selling habits made possible by new facilities afforded to advertisers by the popular press, and a progressive improvement in the manner [. . .] of advertising itself” (249). Smith was born in 1874, joining the Daily Mail as a young man upon its founding in 1896. He began as an advertising clerk, and after working his way through the ranks of the organisation, became a director on the board of Associated Newspapers, most famous as the Daily Mail’s parent company, in 1907. His memoirs, Spilt Ink, offer an overview of the development of advertising as a prominent industry in the first two decades of the twentieth century, encompassing both the year of Ulysses’ setting, and of its writing. Smith’s chief, Alfred Harmsworth, is mentioned briefly in “Aeolus,” where he is described as “Harmsworth of the farthing press” (176). While the autobiographical status of Smith’s memoirs, and his abrupt dismissal from his post on the grounds of poor health, leave his statements open to claims of a skewed perspective, Spilt Ink is an invaluable guide to the field of newspaper advertisement in this period.

In the process of making the publications of the Associated Newspapers organisation amenable to the needs of the contemporary advertiser, Smith became engaged in a lengthy battle

with his chief. Smith was compelled to champion the advertisers' corner, through his belief in the informative nature of ads, and the great commercial benefits to be gained for the newspaper by their inclusion. Harmsworth's reservations stemmed from an adherence to the conception of the newspaper as offering, first and foremost, a news service, a conception that Bloom has already abandoned by 1904. When Smith requests the use of sections of the *Daily Mail*'s front page for adverts boasting display type and illustrations, Harmsworth complains of the potential to "vulgarise" the paper (qtd. in Smith 35). He ultimately grants Smith permission for the use of display typography, but continues to rail against the visual disruption of his newspaper at the hands of these ad-driven developments. Smith reports that "'type' offended him. And yet he plastered the sides of houses and railway bridges and the sky with hideous advertisements of the *Daily Mail*. He hated it, however, in his newspapers" (35). Smith sees this as a double standard; display text has been liberated in all reaches of the city, and yet the very product that prompted this colonisation by ad material must remain impermeable to such vulgar visual impact. Smith's instincts told him that, as Bloom surmised, the public appetite tended toward the advert in preference to news. By 1932, this suspicion was, he felt, confirmed: "lacking the full pages of miscellaneous retail announcements to which the front of the *Daily Mail* is now devoted on three days of every week, this journal would disappoint a goodly section of its readers and provoke a storm of protest from them and from the business community" (249).

The ongoing battle between Smith and Harmsworth was, in Smith's eyes, "virtually a fight for the birth of modern press advertising" (35). This fight at first seems to centre upon the inadequacy of relatively new technologies of paper production and print quality: "Usually it was the size of the type. When it was not the type it was the illustrations. The type was too 'overwhelming' [. . .] or the illustrations were too black, or the block didn't print well, or a bit of it showed through and gave a society lady a moustache" (35). However, it seems that for Harmsworth the control of the space of his newspaper is a matter of propriety (hinted at in Smith's society lady image), and of the gentlemanly attitude and informative role of the press. Eventually, Smith was to get his way, with permission to use illustrations anywhere on the page, over the whole paper, and on any day of the week (Smith 36). However, communiqués from Harmsworth while Smith was in post made clear that he still viewed these newly display-oriented and spatially voracious ads as vulgar, physically damaging, filled with visually offensive, ill-controlled and morally abhorrent typography. In June 1908 he wrote that "The front page of this morning's *Daily Mail* is a disgrace to the business. We debauch the whole of

advertising,” while a telegram of November 1920 simply states that “Page two is a disgraceful piece of work. CHIEF” (qtd. in Smith 36). A letter also came from Harmsworth’s wife, Lady Northcliffe, while her husband was recovering from a bout of illness, stating: “The Chief says he suffered a severe relapse on seeing the horrible front page of the *Daily Mail* yesterday. He says he feels like a bird wounded with an arrow” (qtd. in Smith 36). Yet during Smith’s tenure as advertising director, this vulgar and offensive home for the ad became the daily newspaper with the largest net sale of any paper worldwide (Smith 18).

For Smith, it was clear who was in charge of these developments in newspaper advertising, and thence in the newspaper itself. While he saw himself as a pioneer and champion of the new methods, it was companies with products to promote that truly drove change: “The newspaper proprietors, in reaching out for larger papers, are offering more space than the advertiser can fill. Instead, therefore, of the advertiser asking for space, the papers are asking for advertisements. The advertiser gives them on his own terms as to type and very often as to price as well” (38). With the balance of power swayed towards the advertisers, the potential for grand claims and misrepresentations was presumably increased. However, Smith’s experiences in a crucial transitional phase for advertising leave his convictions about the positive nature of the advertising industry unchanged. Looking back to 1900, Smith notes that “The million had no guide to them [purchase possibilities] until they eventually arrived at the shop windows” (247). The newspaper’s role as guide to city space is therefore developed through the inclusion of ads, for all their disruption of Harmsworth’s tidy pages. This guiding process is one that clearly calibrates the reader to the rhythms of expenditure, yet Smith sees this as a vital process, and a saviour for the masses lost in a sea of choices. Advertising, for Smith, offers the contemporary consumer the chance to be more discerning as to price, to subsequently demand more for their money, and to scrutinise in a more informed manner the quality of the products on offer: “It is certain that the householder obtains far more now for his money than he did in, say, 1896. He obtains it because his markets are much wider and less obscure. Current prices are presented to him daily, and selling competition gives them stability” (Smith 251). Smith’s description suggests that perspicacity in terms of production and price will result in more free and determined choices amongst consumers, although implicit within his descriptions is the incitement of the desire to own or consume, which is *subsequently* satisfied by the purchase. This is further underlined when he refers to the comparatively minimal utility of the ads in the *Daily Mail*’s youth, which “yielded the trader an entirely different service. They were a

directing, rather than the creative force which they have now become" (249). Thus the ad does act as a guide to purchase, and often an informative one, but it also creates the desire for purchase, which may not exist prior to the viewing of the ad. It at once creates the need for and supplies the knowledge of a product, just as it subsequently creates the desire for and makes clear the means of acquiring the product depicted.<sup>1</sup>

Smith is, despite his references to the creation of consumer desire, convinced of the morality of the advertising industry, in which context he believes that "it neither pays an advertiser to insert, nor a newspaper to admit, misrepresentations or exaggerated descriptions of merchandise" (249). Smith goes so far as to claim that ads have operated as a force for civilisation in the modern world:

if modern advertising, rendered possible by newspaper-circulation on a modern scale, has been of priceless benefit to commerce by opening to it markets of a previously undreamt-of magnitude, it has also served, no less loyally, the purchasing public. [. . .] It is therefore a vehicle for advancing civilisation. For if civilised man differs from the savage, it is [. . .] chiefly in the number and the beauty of his wants (252).

Expanding the number of man's wants, directing their kind, number and nature, and offering the miraculously tailored satiation of these desires is the effort of advertising as it developed in the early twentieth century. However, other writers considering the power of advertising in the 1930s were less keen to perceive its development as a force for civilisation. In a debate broadcast by the BBC in 1936, prominent advertising critic C.P. Snow distinguished between the guiding role of advertising and its inculcation of desire:

I have no objection to display in a shop window or to a catalogue – advertising of the kind that helps us to find our way about. But a form of advertising has grown up in the last fifty years which aims at something more forceful [. . .]. I see modern advertising as an attempt to impel people to buy what, if it were not for the advertisement, they would never think of buying. Advertising begins by taking our money and ends by depriving us of our freedom (qtd. in Nevett 161).

While the guiding function of more traditional forms of advertising facilitates choice, the creative forces of newer forms *implies* an expansion of choice in the manner that Smith suggests,

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<sup>1</sup> It is worth noting here that Smith was responsible for establishing the Ideal Home Exhibition at Olympia in 1910, an event that purported to offer the home owner access to the products available to furnish their homes, rather than relying on the recommendations of the architect, as was traditional. For Smith, this liberation into a world of choice was valuable due to the increasing advertising needs of the companies whose wares were promoted at the show.

whilst in fact removing the key human privilege of choice by generating unfounded consumer desire. Writing one year earlier in 1935, A.A. Milne criticised the distancing of the product and its ad-created appeal, suggesting that a lack of truth insinuated itself in that distance. While he was able to tolerate such an approach for the general run of commodities, he objected to its use in connection with literature:

Appeal-value is what modern advertising supplies. The goods and the appeal-value come from separate buildings. Books are now being sold and advertised in just the way that other commodities are sold and advertised – by engaging a special shouter-down to shout down the other man. And why not, it may be asked? Because books are not like other commodities. [. . .] They have a personality of their own and should be given a chance of survival (qtd. in Nevett 160-1).

What Milne identifies here is a driving force behind the grand claims of ads, and their tactics of generating a desire within consumers which they then neatly step forward to fulfill. The UK's industrial manufacturing productive capacities had produced, for the first time, a surplus of products. Companies selling similar products with minimal differences in quality or function, what may be termed parity products, were forced to make distinctions that elevated their particular product above the competition.<sup>2</sup> Ads were therefore inherently attuned to creating distinction and desire, even where neither existed. This economic shift also explains the importance of brand names, as companies able to suggest that their soap was *the* soap for the family home, i.e. to become synonymous with household soap, would dismiss other companies' claims for their equivalent products. Milne objects to this tack being taken for literary production, given the distinct "personality" of each book, in which a peculiar labour by a particular individual results in a non-parity product with no direct competition.

A fictional work of the 1930s echoes some of Milne's concerns, and indeed Snow's, and challenges Smith's suggestion that advertising is a force for civilisation with an unequivocal suggestion that it is a barbarous, filthy and life-destroying industry. George Orwell's Keep the Aspidistra Flying of 1936 follows the misfortunes of Gordon Comstock, former copywriter at the New Albion advertising company, subsequently a refugee from the business world with a prospect-free job in a second-hand book shop. Staring out of the book shop window he notices that:

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<sup>2</sup> This may perhaps be seen as an early stage in a process that ends, in late capitalist spectacular society, in "a ceaseless manufacture of pseudo-needs" (Debord 33).



Opposite, next to the Prince of Wales, were tall hoardings covered with ads for patent foods and patent medicines exhorting you to rot your guts with this or that synthetic garbage. [. . .] Of them all, the Bovex one oppressed Gordon the most. A spectacled rat-faced clerk, with patent-leather hair, sitting at a café table grinning over a white mug of Bovex. 'Roland Butta enjoys his meal with Bovex,' the legend ran. (Orwell 3-4).

Roland Butta haunts Gordon throughout the text, becoming, as his "patent" leather hair suggests, the embodiment of the advertising industry that Gordon has escaped. He pretends that he is immune to the appeal of such ads, and with a second glance out of the window "He almost wanted to laugh at them, they were so feeble, so dead-alive, so unappetising. As though anybody could be tempted by *those!* [. . .] But they depressed him all the same" (13). It is Roland Butta that prompts a reverie about the end of the world, linking the empty appeals of the ads to the desolation of modern life:

The sense of disintegration, of decay, that is endemic in our time, was strong upon him. Somehow it was mixed up with the ad-posters opposite. He looked now with more seeing eyes at those grinning yard-wide faces. After all, there was more there than silliness, greed and vulgarity. Roland Butta grins at you [. . .]. But what is behind the grin? Desolation, emptiness, prophecies of doom. [. . .] The great death-wish of the modern world. Suicide pacts. Heads stuck in gas-ovens in lonely maisonettes. French letters and Amen Pills. And the reverberations of future wars [. . .] the shattering thunder of the bombs. It is all written in Roland Butta's face (16).

However, a key element of the terror brought about in Gordon by the sight of Roland Butta is an unwanted moment of self-recognition. His family bully him constantly about the importance of a "good" job" (49), a job that, given the imagination of the Comstocks, could well be that of a clerk. When Gordon first spots Roland on the poster opposite, we are told that he "shortened the focus of his eyes. From the dust-dulled pane the reflection of his own face looked back at him" (4). The ad works by representing a ubiquitous London dweller, one of the "strap-hanging army" (52) of city clerks, in order to make as wide an appeal as possible to potential consumers. They are asked to see themselves in the advertisement, an association that works all too well for Gordon. Thus while Roland Butta and the industry he comes to stand in for are seen as a source of civilisation-destroying doom, the excrescence of an empty capitalist society, Roland's appeal also narrows to a moment of self-identification for Gordon.

The New Albion advertising organisation embodies, in Gordon's eyes, the contemporary commercial spirit. "There was hardly a soul in the firm," he explains, "who was not perfectly

well aware that publicity – advertising – is the dirtiest ramp that capitalism has yet produced” (55). While Gordon’s former employees, a red lead firm, had retained “certain notions of commercial honour and usefulness,” he notes that “such things would have been laughed at in the New Albion. [. . .] They had their cynical code worked out. The public are swine; advertising is the rattling of a stick inside a swill-bucket” (55). This selling of swill to the unquestioning masses eventually becomes Gordon’s occupation once more, as he re-joins the New Albion, but not before he has composed a poem, originally a depiction of the harsh wind of the city streets, but ultimately an homage to the “money-god” that he sees as inevitably structuring his life:

*Who spies with jealous, watchful care,  
Our thoughts, our dreams, our secret ways,  
Who picks our words and cuts our clothes,  
And maps the pattern of our days* (168).

However, an accession into the material world, from which Gordon had formerly attempted to hide, removes the experience of unease from the appeals to buy. After receiving payment for the publication of a poem, Gordon reflects: “Roland Butta and the *Daily Mail*! It was a bone-deep truth when he walked the streets with a couple of coppers in his pocket; but it was a joke at this moment” (179). Having temporarily acquired the financial means to join the ranks of consumers, Gordon notes that Roland Butta and the related appeals of ads lose their apocalyptic implications, and become beneath his concern. This immersion in the consumer world is short-lived, however, as Gordon literally consumes his earnings, spending the entire cheque on one night’s food and drink, an orgy of consumption that ultimately lands him in jail.

### **Counter Discourse: The Appeal of the Ad**

Gordon suggests that his initial period of employment at the New Albion was successful due to his unexpected facility in writing affecting advertising copy, “The vivid phrase that sticks and rankles, the neat little para.” (58). However, he feels that there is a “beastly irony” (58) in the fact that an aspiring writer should end up finding success in the advertising of deodorants. Yet we are told that “that was less unusual than he imagined. Most copywriters, they say, are novelists *manqués*; or is it the other way about?” (58). To find further examples of advertising as at once a guide to contemporary consumption and explicator of consumer choice, and a barbarous and coercive force playing with notions of identity, it is possible to look to Joyce, copywriter *manqué*. Jennifer Wicke has suggested that Joyce’s interest in advertising, as

displayed in *Ulysses*, is inevitable given the newly central role of the industry, claiming that “advertising by 1920 had established itself as a prerequisite for doing business of any kind” (120). This central role was made tenable by advertising’s textual or linguistic impact: “Advertising succeeded because it pried loose other languages from their referents, and set them in juxtaposition, creating a new representational system. *Ulysses*’ own juxtaposition of absolutely disparate styles, its use of language as counter and emblem, can only take place in this context” (Wicke 120-1). Wicke’s understanding of advertising text as a kind of linguistic catalyst creating reactions within whatever fields of language it finds as its neighbours is key to a commercially-attuned reading of Joyce’s novel. Joyce dramatises the permeability of even high literary forms to the punning, persuasive, pecuniary language of the ad. For Wicke, Joyce is not lamenting this permeation of the literary by economic forces, but rather celebrating the linguistic possibilities that stem from such a process. Roland Butta does not prompt Joyce to anticipate the destruction of the world. Rather, he prompts a reconsideration of the possibilities of language, desire and truthfulness in this new, commodity-based stage of capitalism. Further, Wicke suggests that “Advertising language out in the actual streets turns the tricks that *Ulysses* then imports into its structures [. . .] the innovations flow from the mass cultural paradigm to the novelistic techniques” (123). This view of advertising as a boundless resource for the exploration of contemporary life is borne out throughout *Ulysses*, although never in the spirit of an unquestioning celebration. In fact, Joyce repeatedly considers the question that Gordon Comstock asks himself when he comes face-to-face with Roland Butta: what does that advert say about me?

Advertising has a variety of functions within the text, operating as a “material thematic” (Wicke 123), questioning the material nature of print, reorientating the question of reading, redefining the relationship between word and referent, facilitating a linguistic meta-commentary (Wicke 124), refracting the subjectivity of the consumer and reinfusing the mythological into life and language. It is these latter two functions that are perhaps central to an understanding of Joyce’s attitude to advertising within the novel. In considering the impact of advertising on the self-conception of the contemporary subject, Joyce comes to structure an entire episode around an ideal consumer. In “Nausicaa,” Gerty MacDowell is seen to be this ideal consumer as her passive absorption of the claims of advertisements show her to be, first and foremost, a consumer of ideals. The episode is written in the language of romantic cliché, a language familiar to Gerty from her readings of romances in the women’s magazines of her time. The

scene is set in just this language, as "Far away in the west the sun was setting and the last glow of all too fleeting day lingered lovingly on sea and strand" (*Ulysses* 449). This pastiche of serialised romance is filtered through Gerty's own consciousness and thus includes misapplications of phrases, such as when the twins' fight is described: "The apple of discord was a certain castle of sand" (451). Just as the scene is captured in whimsical language, so too is Gerty's internal monologue that takes over the narrative at several points in the episode. Gerty's physical appearance is similarly circumscribed: "Gerty MacDowell [. . .] gazing far away into the distance, was in very truth as fair a specimen of winsome Irish girlhood as one could wish to see" (452). Here, Gerty stands in for the women of Ireland, operating as a trope that "one could wish to see," an ideal and the object of a gaze. This role is of course played out through Bloom's watchful and sexual fascination with her. However, Gerty's operation as trope or cipher is generated through the language of her own reading. It is the predominance of advertising copy in her reading material that prepares her for her function as ideal, and in this way her textual consumption comes to trap her within its expectations.

Throughout the episode, Gerty's construction as a romantic heroine is juxtaposed with beauty tips, cod science and recommendations regarding fashion. Gordon Comstock, searching the local public library for information on childbirth in light of his impending fatherhood, comes across an American publication that echoes the make-up of Gerty's earlier magazines of choice. As usual, this commercialised text displeases him: "Page after page, advert after advert. Lipsticks, undies, tinned food, patent medicines, slimming cures, face-creams. A sort of cross-section of the money-world. A panorama of ignorance, greed, vulgarity, snobbishness, whoredom and disease" (262). While Gordon's opinions are extreme, it is precisely this sort of combination of items that would be found in Gerty's closely read publications: the *Princess Novelette* (453), *Pearson's Weekly* (460) and the *Lady's Pictorial* (455). In this way the "Nausicaa" episode moves from "Mayhap it was this, the love that might have been, that lent to her softly-featured face at whiles a look, tense with suppressed meaning" (453), to "It was Madame Vera Verity, directress of the Woman Beautiful page of the *Princess novelette*, who had first advised her to try eyebrowline which gave that haunting expression to the eyes" (453). Madame Verity, the speaker of truth, suggests a beauty product that will enable the user to insert themselves into just the type of romantic role that Joyce's text ascribes to Gerty. The phrase "that haunting expression" seems to belong to Madame Verity herself, but of course references the stories of romance amongst which such recommendations would be found in the pages of the

novelette. To accede to the role of romantic heroine one must first turn to the products recommended, that is to say advertised, by the speaker of "truth" and commerce whose text accompanies the romance.

Such recommendations are followed to the letter by Gerty, as demonstrated when we are told that she "was dressed simply but with the instinctive taste of a votary of Dame Fashion" (455). There is an inherent contradiction here. While Gerty's fashionable tastes are said to be "instinctive," they are also the result of an almost religious devotion to "Dame Fashion" who, whilst an embodiment of the ephemerality of fashion sense, is also a regular feature of the pages of the Lady's Pictorial. The 14 May 1904 edition of this magazine includes, for example, a page of the most recent advances in millinery, subheaded "Dame Fashion's Latest Decree" (Pictorial 911). Such decrees are followed as norms of dressing for the modern woman, indicated when Gerty is said to be sporting "A neat blouse of electric blue, selftinted by dolly dyes (because it was expected in the *Lady's Pictorial* that electric blue would be worn)" (455). The appearance of this last statement and the reference to Dame Fashion on a single page of Joyce's text, suggests that he was familiar with the details of the Lady's Pictorial and had its recommendations in mind when constructing the character of Gerty. This supports the claims of critics that have suggested a passionate interest on Joyce's part in the techniques of advertisement (Wicke 124-5; Berger 25-33; Gunn 483). Gerty's magazine-guided interest in fashion and consumption is interwoven with a competitive nature directed towards her friends, and an awareness of the marriage market as just that, a competition in which she must effectively advertise herself with the help of Dame Fashion and her ilk. This competitive instinct is apparent when she recalls that "All Tuesday week afternoon she was hunting to match that chenille but at last she found what she wanted [. . .] she knew that that would take the shine out of some people she knew" (455). The marriage market is shown to be a central concern when she imagines a report of her own wedding, possibly in the Lady's Pictorial which carried a weekly page of engagements and marriages in just such terms: "Mrs Gertrude Wylie was wearing a sumptuous confection of grey trimmed with expensive blue fox" (Ulysses 456-7).

Having achieved her fictional marriage by the successful marketing of her body through the expectations set up by advertising material in the women's magazines she consumes, Gerty establishes a vision of blissful married life that is again centred around the consumption of ideal commodities. Her domestic life with Reggy Wylie will include "chintz covers for the chairs and



that silver toastrack in Clery's summer jumble sales like they have in rich houses" (458). The connection between idealised romance and expenditure and consumption is underscored by Gerty's recollection of the family grocer's Christmas gift of an almanac: "Mr Tunney the grocer's christmas almanac the picture of halcyon days where a young gentleman in the costume they used to wear then with a threecornered hat was offering a bunch of flowers to his ladylove with oldtime chivalry [. . .]. You could see there was a story behind it" (462). Gerty's romantic imagination is compelled toward an emotional investment in the scene, although the "story behind it" is, in truth, the grocer's wish for the ongoing loyalty of her family to his shop, facilitated by a daily reminder through the medium of an almanac. The almanac's primary function is not, therefore, to look back at romance in days of yore, nor forward to anticipate future happy occurrences, but only to anticipate future trade for Mr Tunney.

When Gerty becomes aware that she has an audience in Bloom, Reggy Wylie is jettisoned in favour of a new romantic narrative of the mysterious stranger with a troubled past. The object of her special care, and subject of her greatest expenditure, her underwear, features heavily in this fantasy of Bloom as her future husband: "She was glad that something told her to put on the transparent stockings [. . .]. It was he who mattered and there was joy on her face because she wanted him because she felt instinctively that he was like no-one else. The very heart of the girl-woman went out to him, her dreamhusband, because she knew on the instant it was him" (465-6). The underlying premise of the fashion recommendations of Gerty's magazines is that men will take notice, and that the marriage market operates in much the same way as the market for commodities: by the creation of arbitrary distinctions between parity products. Thus in order not only to keep up with other women of your age, but in fact to distinguish yourself from them, you must pay attention to outward appearances. The equivalence of women implied here brings Joyce back to the function of Gerty as trope: of young womanhood, or Ireland, of the seaside girl. This equivalence is at odds with the romantic dramas depicted elsewhere in the magazines, and yet the idealised notion of romance is essential to the process of consumption, as it perpetuates the belief that love and marriage are the true aim and right of all women. This complex interlinking of commerce and romance perhaps explains why Gerty's dreams of marriage and her concern with underlinen become intertwined: "Three and eleven she paid for those stockings [. . .] and that was what he was looking at [. . .] because he had eyes in his head to see the difference for himself" (468). In the period of Gerty's search for a husband, she was not alone in her anxieties. Cynthia L. White has identified a link between the content of

women's magazines of the time and the problem of "surplus women" and the competitiveness of the marriage market (White 81). Lessons applied in the economic sector therefore held good for those looking for a husband: in an extremely competitive market, keeping to a high standard of display is crucial.

In the context of this marriage market, Gerty at once performs and is subject to the connection between advertising and romance. The stories of romance that she reads in her choice of magazines hold out a tantalising prospect of future love and marriage, which White claims are far beyond the majority of young women in Gerty's era. These stories are juxtaposed with advertisements tailored towards, and productive of, the dreams of young women. Through these ads Gerty has learnt the appropriate ways in which to display herself to the opposite sex; ways which are dependent on the purchase of a product, be it transparent stockings or eyebrowline. In this way, she makes the link between the idealised romance of magazine stories and the purchase of products advertised alongside them. Further, the ads themselves proclaim the benefits to be gained for a young woman's appearance through the purchase of a given product, and these claims have a particular resonance given the competition for eligible men. Wyndham Lewis, writing in 1927, claims a further connection between advertising and romance. The term "romance" itself has come to denote "what is unreal or unlikely, or at all events not present, in contrast to what is *scientifically* true and accessible to the senses here and now" (Lewis 11). It is thus that which "partakes of the marvellous, the extreme, the unusual" (11). Given that Joyce clearly makes a connection between these three terms and the field of advertising, it is perhaps no surprise to find Lewis concluding that "Indeed, there is nothing so "romantic" as Advertisement" (11). Ads make spurious, un-verifiable claims that seek to dazzle the potential purchaser, and in this way they are unscientific and absolutely romantic. The link between the ad and the logic-free world of cheap romantic literature is therefore clear, since neither bears any relation to scientific truth. Gerty is romantic in both senses: whimsical and unscientific, susceptible to the marvellous, and looking for romantic love from an idealised husband figure.

While "Nausicaa" has often been read as an episode in which Bloom's masturbation at the sight of Gerty's underwear demonstrates the objectification of women who were always doubly implicated in the selling process (as a sexualised decoration to the commodity's appeal, and the ideal consumer of commercial products), the episode in fact also contains the objectification of Bloom as dreamhusband, a figure that functions as the ultimate reason behind a devotion to

Dame Fashion. In fact, Bloom becomes complicit in his own casting as figure of romance when he idly sketches a piece of writing for a newspaper, "*The Mystery Man on the Beach*, prize titbit story by Mr Leopold Bloom. Payment at the rate of one guinea per column" (490). The element of romance, the "titbit" scope of the story and the payment by textual volume suggests a cheap or "low" daily newspaper as the imagined recipient of Bloom's efforts. While Bloom is himself cast in the romantic economy of the mass press or women's magazine, his final thoughts regarding Gerty return her to her position as trope, and tie her explicitly to contemporary advertising. "Didn't look back when she was going down the strand," he notes, "Wouldn't give that satisfaction. Those girls, those girls, those lovely seaside girls" (484). This reference to seaside girls recalls the song of Blazes Boylan, as is confirmed when Bloom adds "Your head it simply swirls. He's right" (485).

However, the seaside girl has a further significance, constituting as it does a familiar advertising trope of the period. Thomas Richards has noted that "as the prop of billboards and postcards, her [Gerty's] facsimile surfeited the public with seaside settings and cheap tableaux" (211). The seaside girl functioned, from the late nineteenth century onwards, as a symbol of leisure, a sexual fantasy and a commonplace of advertising. Gerty performs all three of these roles within the "Nausicaa" episode. Further, Richards observes that ads making use of the seaside girl image rarely clutter that image with a representation of the product being advertised: "the irreferentiality of the image is nearly complete. Instead a slogan appropriates the seaside girl" (231). Gerty is at the mercy of slogans and recommendations of purchase throughout the episode, integrating them into the broken syntax of her own interior monologue. Richards goes so far as to suggest that Gerty, in functioning as the seaside girl, a sexualised symbol of leisure within the ad man's gaze, is in fact "looking at passersby from within the frame of an advertised fiction by which she is wholly circumscribed" (234). The seaside girl reference, recurring at this juncture, serves as a final reminder of the extent to which Gerty's own identity is circumscribed by consumer culture. This is a fate that she takes to constitute a multiplicity of choice, but in fact narrows the bounds of acceptable identity within the possibilities of appropriate purchase. Richards states that "the seaside girl did not just personalize and customize the spectacular representation of the commodity," but in fact "integrated all the advertised spectacles of the past twenty years into a single dense locus of commodity culture" (247). Gerty's reduction to locus of sale and consumption, a reduction that collapses the potential for an individuated identity into

the emptiest of generalities, is demonstrated throughout *Ulysses* to be the fate of the contemporary consumer.

### **Credo, Credit, Credulity: Structures of Belief in Advertising and Religion**

In addition to romance, fashion, and fetishised sexuality, there is another presence on the beach in "Nausicaa": religion. Father Conroy's church overlooking the beach is a key feature of the episode, and the sounds of the Mass are interpolated between Bloom's two attempts at masturbation. Sexuality and religion are here conjoined, as perhaps they began to be in Gerty's recollection of her confession. Gerty's relationship with her confessor ultimately becomes expressed in terms of commodity consumption as she contemplates a suitable gift for the Father (467). Sexuality, religion and forms of consumption are again linked when Bloom stares at Gerty: "His dark eyes fixed themselves on her again drinking in her every contour, literally worshipping at her shrine" (471). This seems to be a strange expression of the voyeuristic relationship that is under way, with Bloom's visual consumption figured as the act of a religious suppliant. The inaccuracy of expression, present in the use of the term "literally" to denote a metaphorical relationship, suggests that it is Gerty's interior monologue that creates the image, blending the influences of two guiding voices in her life: the Catholic church, and the romantic parlance of women's magazines.<sup>3</sup> Gerty is not alone in this articulation of the confluence between Catholic rhetoric and ritual and the language and behaviours of contemporary consumption. Religious drinking, or Communion, in fact functions in Joyce's text as a mediating figure that enables the exploration of the complex relationship between religion and commodity culture. This relationship plays out across Joyce's text, and is crucial to an understanding of the spatially voracious role of advertising he comes to sketch.

It may be suggested that supplicancy, the role assigned to Bloom by Gerty in an echo of the ritualised position of Conroy's flock, is comparable to the stance of the consumer before the ad. Indeed, if Gerty is to be seen as the living embodiment of the seaside girl trope, then Bloom's supplication does occur before an instance of advertising. It is the act of Mass that, here in relation to Conroy, and elsewhere in the novel, generates a moment in which the similarities in

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<sup>3</sup> The misuse of "literally" also allies Gerty with another working class woman in Joyce's oeuvre, Lily the caretaker's daughter in "The Dead." See Joyce, "The Dead" 199. This parallel confirms the influence of

operating structure and modes of appeal between the seemingly disjunct worlds of religion and capitalist consumption become apparent. Both the Catholic Mass and the ad constitute rituals of consumption, highly symbolic events promising transcendence or transformation through the action of ostensible volition. Making a specific appeal to a seemingly individuated consumer or supplicant, such rituals in fact operate by making that same promise to *every* consumer or supplicant. This ubiquitous specificity is part of the new form of social reading that the consumer society demands, and has a significant impact on notions of the self in this period. It links advertising and religion in the broadest structural terms, since it suggests that a communal (Communion) reading is under way, and that the rituals or ads offer a mass (Mass) appeal. Aware of Conroy's service, Bloom notes: "Mass seems to be over. Could hear them all at it. Pray for us. And pray for us. And pray for us. Good idea the repetition. Same thing with ads. Buy from us. And buy from us" (492).

This is not the first instance in which Bloom has meditated on the commercial lessons to be learnt from Catholic structures of worship. Earlier, he had noted that the use of Latin for the Mass "stupefies them first" (99), preparing worshippers for their moment of consumption. Later, Bloom observes of the sandwich board men advertising Hely's stationery: "Like the priest they are this morning: we have sinned: we have suffered" (194). The confession of sin precedes, for the man bearing a "Y" on his chest, the eating of a chunk of bread, just as Confession must precede Communion in the Catholic church. The connection between the Eucharist and advertising is made as the sandwich board men come to embody the sins of the world. Stupefaction, repetition and unthinking credulity are utilised by both advertisers and religious leaders in their offering of a moment of salvation via consumption. However, the issue of ubiquitous specificity creates a tension between the repeated and the unique in advertisements. Bloom's dream ad, his lullaby in the "Ithaca" episode, is described as "some one sole unique advertisement to cause passers to stop in wonder, a poster novelty, with all extraneous accretions excluded, reduced to its simplest and most efficient terms not exceeding the span of casual vision and congruous with the velocity of modern life" (848). This advert, whose affect will be created through its pared down nature, "with all extraneous accretions excluded," prompting only the urge to purchase, will suit the modern consumer and his/her contemporary context. While tailored in this way for mass appeal, and holding the gaze of "passers by," in the plural,

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Gerty's own parlance on the narrative at this point in the episode, as she controls the construction of the



who stop in wonder, it will also be “unique,” and a “poster novelty.” While the ad would be replicated around the city, and while the process of gazing at it would involve, on at least an unconscious level, the understanding that it was one among many, the reading experience is one of uniqueness. This reading process echoes the effect achieved by the ad itself, since it holds the gaze of the individual, mesmerised by its appropriate velocity, and repeats this operation on the passing multitude. Adorno and Horkheimer, speaking of the mode of operation of advertising and the culture industry for which it forms a model, note that the ad “can be seen in innumerable places, and the mechanical repetition [. . .] has come to be the same as that of the propaganda slogan” (163). They add that “the insistent demand for effectiveness makes technology into psychotechnology, into a procedure for manipulating men. [. . .] the standards are the striking yet familiar, the easy yet catchy, the skilful yet simple; the object is to overpower the customer, who is conceived as absent-minded or resistant” (163). The latter part of this description echoes Bloom’s dream of superior advertising effectiveness, while the former part again draws attention to the ad’s status as a copy, a status concealed by Bloom’s phrasing, “one sole unique advertisement.”

The tension between individuation and the repetition of that experience across a multitude of consumers occurs in a wide variety of advertisements, just as it occurs in the act of communion. Commodity culture observes that uniqueness is the essential claim to be made in the attempt to distinguish products in a marketplace. Yet ads also rely on the need to conform to an ideal, to reach a standard that, it is suggested, is met by other consumers, elsewhere. Yoking these two forms of appeal together results in the underlying slogan: you too are entitled to uniqueness – just like everyone else! This ubiquitous specificity is perhaps a forerunner of the “language of generalized separation” that Debord observes in his 1967 study, The Society of the Spectacle (Debord 12). His contention is that the spectacle, here the advertising spectacle, comes to offer a space of communal experience that masks the actual isolation of the contemporary subject from any such communal encounter.

It is just these sorts of appeal, to individuation and mass conformism, that operate in the ad environment in which Bloom, and indeed Joyce, work. As Garry Leonard has pointed out, “Consumption in a commodity culture is as much a psychological process as an economic one

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cheap romance between herself and the dreamhusband Bloom.

because the connection between what we purchase and what we actually need has been completely severed” (Leonard 54). Spending in excess of the satiation of physical need of course funds the development of capitalism, but it could perhaps be argued that *Ulysses* is written in the thick of a shift towards a tailored means of appeal that facilitates precisely this sort of consumption behaviour: advertising. Smith attributes this shift, from the “directing” or informative role of the ad, to its function as a “creative force,” to the years between the founding of the *Daily Mail* in 1896 and the publication of his memoirs in 1932 (Smith 249). Having severed the compulsion to purchase from a genuine relation to need, ads must find a mode of operation that constructs idealised worlds, or rather that prompts the potential consumer to construct such worlds. Religion offers a model for this sort of appeal, working as it does in terms of psychological realms rather than lived experience. The mental space of the modern subject, reconfigured as potential consumer, endures a sort of land battle in the early twentieth century, as waning religion has its structures appropriated and deployed in the most effective form in advertising. Debord has identified two key stages in the domination of social life by capitalist economics. The first “entailed an obvious downgrading of *being* into *having*,” while the second “entails a generalized shift from *having* to *appearing*” (16). *Ulysses* is written at a time when *having* comes to structure ontology, an experience bodied forth in the character of Gerty. Yet in many ways the second shift, which Debord sees as more properly belonging to his own era of late or spectacular capitalism, is prefigured in the text. The visual impact of the spatialised text of the ad functions in the realm of appearances, and sells a flexible image of the ideal consumer disjunct from reality. Debord makes explicit the link between the developing importance of appearing and the experience of a false or apparent communion that prevents the construction of a coherent subjectivity when he states that “all individual reality [. . .] has assumed a social character. Indeed, it is only inasmuch as individual reality is *not* that it is allowed to *appear*” (16).

Throughout *Ulysses*, religion and advertising perform a dance around consonant terms, structures and moments. What is dramatised is the falling away of religious credulity, concomitant with the increasing belief in the transformative properties of moments of commodity consumption, moments in which the contemporary subject is able to perceive a world beyond quotidian reality, a world that in turn validates that reality as genuine experience. Indeed, it is perhaps possible to distinguish between “buying” and “consumption” as terms by suggesting that consumption involves the taking on of ideals or idealisations as part and parcel of

the act of purchase. Purchase in this way has a performative or at least ritualised aspect. Consumption therefore belongs most properly to the phase of capitalism at work in Bloom's time: that structured around the commodity. The necessity of arbitrary distinctions between parity products brings about the presentation of just such idealisations, facilitated by the developing advertising industry. One of the most consistently referenced commodities in the novel is Plumtree's Potted Meat, as its ad has captured the imagination of Bloom: "What is home without Plumtree's Potted Meat? Incomplete. With it, an abode of bliss" (91). The faultiness of the domestic sphere without this product is a kind of foregrounding of the form of advertising appeal that Snow and Milne objected to in the 1930s; the suggestion of a need and the neat satiation of that need, tied up in a single advertisement. The ad proffers an ideal of home life, in a vague way unconnected to the product itself. However, the promise of "bliss" moves the ad into the realm of the religious, with its implications not merely of happiness or pleasure, but the heavenly.

Mark Osteen has suggested that this implication of domestic incompleteness in the Plumtree's ad makes an oblique reference to the conjugal issues of the Blooms, and that Blazes Boylan may be seen as a human correlate to the meat product (Osteen 720). Bloom's return to Eccles Street sees him brush crumbs of the potted meat from the marriage bed. This leads Osteen to conclude that "Molly and Boylan do renew themselves sexually after (or before) sharing it and do indeed perform a kind of consumerist communion whereby the meat functions as host and lubricates their erotic commerce" (722). Again, sexuality is the third term haunting the religion/consumption relationship. It is often argued that potted meat and Blazes Boylan become connected obsessions or mental tics for Bloom. However, this particular commodity is perhaps more relevant as an example of the grand claims of products throughout the text, in which the most quotidian of items becomes a potential source of salvation, transformation or renewal. Before such claims, repeated among instances of advertising, the contemporary consumer is figured as credulous supplicant, his/her belief prompting his/her subsequent purchase. Yet this is a credulity that understands the fictitious status of the ad, a willed belief in the impossible, the unlikely and the miraculous. Debord cites Feuerbach on just this connection between the sacred experience and the knowledge of illusion: "*illusion only is sacred, truth profane. Nay, sacredness is held to be enhanced in proportion as truth decreases and illusion increases, so that the highest degree of illusion comes to be the highest degree of sacredness*" (Debord 11). When Joyce spots the connection between the modes of operation of the religious and consumer illusions, he thus

observes life on the cusp of the society of the spectacle, in which, as Debord notes, advertising plays a key role (13).

In fact, advertising's consonance with religion reflects a similarity between the wider category of the spectacle and the promissory shape of the religious experience. For Debord, "The spectacle is the material reconstruction of the religious illusion. [. . .] those cloud-enshrouded entities have now been brought down to earth. [. . .] The absolute denial of life, in the shape of a fallacious paradise, is no longer projected onto the heavens, but finds its place instead within material life itself" (17-18). The promise of betterment or completion has passed from the celestial realm to the commercial, but the element of illusion involved prevents a genuine transformation in personal or social life. Yet Jean Baudrillard has observed the tendency for consumers in late capitalism to experience consumption, or the plenty of excess production, as miraculous. For him, "the blessings of consumption [. . .] are experienced as a *miracle*" (Baudrillard 31), while "the profusion of goods is felt as a *blessing of nature*, as a manna, a gift from heaven" (32). It is the distancing of the consumer experience from the labours of the production process that lends consumption the patina of the miraculous. The language of miracle and transformation present in the ad further aids in the masking of the social effort involved in production (Baudrillard 32). Joyce's connections between consumer goods and religious experience may thus be seen as a prefiguring of the relationship between man and commodity plenty that will become manifest later in the twentieth century, when society takes a spectacular turn.

While advertisements borrow the rhetoric of salvation, the conceptual traffic also flows in the opposite direction, with religion figured as an advertising scam. Bloom's observations as to the efficacy of the Mass link religion and consumption on a formal level, and elsewhere the connection between religion and selling is yet more explicit. Wandering by the canal, Bloom finds a flyer for charismatic speaker Alexander Dowie, prompting a passage presented in a language that oscillates between that of the street-seller, and of the preacher himself:

Christicle, who's this excrement yellow gosseller on the Merrion hall? Elijah is coming washed in the Blood of the Lamb [. . .]. Alexander J. Christ Dowie, that's yanked to glory most half this planet from 'Frisco Beach to Vladivostok. The Deity ain't no nickel dime bumshow. I put it to you that he's on the square and a corking fine business proposition. [. . .] He's got a cough-mixture with a punch in it for you, my friend, in his backpocket. Just you try it on (561).

Dowie, taking on the “excrement yellow” hue of his own publicity, will function as a modern Elijah. His terms of appeal will, however, be thoroughly modern, presenting Jesus as a “business proposition,” conflating the semantics of credulity, credo and credit, as belief moves to formalised statement of belief, and thence to purchase or consumption. Again, it is the moment of consumption, of the “cough-mixture” of the Eucharist, that will be the watershed event, in which the individuated supplicant (“you”) will undergo the transformative effects of a process that has already affected “half this planet.” The perfectly tailored appeal of the commodity of Christ is indicated in the final “Just you try it on”: Christ suits all comers. The panacea status of the cough-mixture of Christ lends to this passage the tenor of the mountebank, a character who traditionally makes use of theatricality to promote an improbable and mysterious cure. If the speaker of this section of the narrative is, after all, Alexander Dowie, the hint at his status as mountebank adds a sense of unease to this advertisement, which threatens his exposure as a charlatan. Through this instance of advertising and its rhetorical devices, Jesus is transformed into a saleable commodity, a theatrical event of great value (“no nickel dime bumshow”), and a means of personalised, and yet near ubiquitous, transcendence. Yet the excesses of his claims lend a cynical tone to the narrative.

In a novel published just four years after *Ulysses*, religion is again seen as supplanted or transformed by the advertisement’s more voracious appetite for conversion. In F. Scott Fitzgerald’s *The Great Gatsby*, Michaelis attempts to find a source of solace for George Wilson after the death of his wife. “You ought to have a church, George, for times like this,” says Michaelis, “You must have gone to church once. Didn’t you get married in a church?” (Fitzgerald 150). George, stupefied, goes to the window and stares out towards a giant hoarding advertising an optician’s which has been a presence throughout the text. Recalling a fight with his late wife, George remembers saying “God knows what you’ve been doing [. . .]. You may fool me, but you can’t fool God!” (152). This reference to religious belief is subsequently undermined, however:

Standing behind him, Michaelis saw with a shock that he was looking at the eyes of Doctor T.J. Eckleburg, which had just emerged, pale and enormous, from the dissolving night.

‘God sees everything,’ repeated Wilson.

‘That’s an advertisement,’ Michaelis assured him. [. . .] Wilson stood there for a long time, his face close to the window pane, nodding into the twilight (152).



George's difficulty in distinguishing between the iconography of religion and that of the consumer economy is perhaps a peculiarly modern phenomenon. However, of greater interest is the turn toward ads at a moment when transcendence, a sense of the beyond of daily experience, is needed. The omniscience of God here becomes transformed, through references to sight, into the omnipotence of commerce. It is perhaps worth noting that, in these light conditions, George is likely to be contemplating his own reflection even as he stares into the eyes of God/Eckleburg. Gordon Comstock's window-mediated moment of identification with Roland Butta is a correlate here.

The issue of self-identity in modernity is at the heart of the waning of religion and its gradual colonisation by advertising on a structural and conceptual level. Leonard has suggested that at the root of both commodity culture and religious society is the fact that "the self needs to be authenticated and authorized by something perceived as beyond the self," a need that in turn "makes the successful marketing of a new product – or a new belief – possible" (37). This turn towards the beyond of daily reality, a beyond in which the self will be more perfect, more complete, new and improved, offers the hope of betterment. However, it also, more importantly, validates daily reality as just that, as real experience, perceived by a real self. For Leonard "there is no political or mythic dimension for advertisements that is not connected to the equally political and mythic structure of the "autonomous" subject; advertisements cannot be anything more than what they persuade us to think we are doing, and who they allow us to think we are" (41). The role of advertising in constructing the autonomous subject is illustrated most fully in the figure of Gerty, whose image is circumscribed by the conventions of the titillating seaside girl poster, whose broken syntax is that of the juxtaposition of commercial products, and whose narrative of future married life is mapped out according to the expectations of the Lady's Pictorial. This is, then, a non-autonomous self, authored by advertisers and modelled on the latest dictates of Dame Fashion. In their seminal essay "The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception," the very title of which conjures up the notion of religious revelation, Adorno and Horkheimer suggest that in late capitalism, "the individual is an illusion [. . .]. Pseudo individuality is rife," and that "The peculiarity of the self is a monopoly commodity determined by society; it is falsely represented as natural" (154). In this way Gerty may be seen as an early instance of an evolving trend in which the potential for individuation is held out as a promise or illusion, masking the real impossibility of individuation.

In a study of the mythic structures of advertising, Varda Langholz Leymore has suggested that "in the same way that concrete goods are never part of an advertisement, so concrete users may never participate in it and only their surrogate may gain admittance. It is because of this simple minded fact that the degree of versatility and flexibility of the user image is so extensive" (Leymore 35). The image of the goods, unless excised as in the seaside girl advertisements to enable a more tenuously connected image to take full effect, must remain close to the "reality" of the product. This is essential in order to facilitate the moment of purchase; there must be a consonance between the appearance of the commodity in actuality, and its representational appearance in the ad. Compared to this relatively static correlation, the "user image" is flexible, since it need bear no real resemblance to the potential consumer confronting the ad, but only to their imagined or idealised self, which in turn will be guided by the image presented in the ad. The self that undergoes quotidian urban experience is effaced by a moment of identification with the "user image" of the ad. It could be suggested that Gerty MacDowell is, then, not merely a manifestation of a familiar advertisement, but also the physical embodiment of the consumer's drive to identification prompted by the advertisement. It is perhaps this sort of self-effacing identification with a constructed consumer, a Roland Butta or a seaside girl, that prompts Williamson to claim that "Advertisements are selling us something else besides consumer goods: [. . .] they are selling us ourselves" (13). Returning once more to Debord, it could be suggested that this alienation from one's own selfhood and desires (the fears of Snow and Milne) is symptomatic of the early stages of a descent into spectacle. Speaking of the spectator of any form of the spectacular, Debord observes that "the more he contemplates, the less he lives; the more readily he recognizes his own needs in the images of need proposed by the dominant system, the less he understands his own existence and his own desires. [. . .] the individual's own gestures are no longer his own, but rather those of someone else who represents them to him" (23).

This issue of the consumer self relates back to the issue of the new forms of social reading prompted by advertisements. Williamson, in a landmark study of the peculiar operations of advertising, suggests that, as well as positing a consumer self which is psychologically distinct, and distanced, from the contemporary subject, ads also lack a subject. "Obviously people invent and produce adverts," she notes, "but apart from the fact that they are unknown and faceless, the ad in any case does not claim to speak from them, it is not their speech" (14). This unspecified, nameless and often collective authorship keeps the precise source of the appeal to consume

obscure and, further, “we are drawn in to fill that gap, so that we become both listener and speaker, subject and object” (Williamson 14). Here the problem of psychological distance from the posited ideal consumer is compounded by the experience of a process of signification that appears to be without origin. Faced with the author-less ad, the contemporary subject feels the unsettling force of this concept of ubiquitous specificity. Author-lessness is of course one of the many rhetorical forms of which Joyce makes extensive use in Ulysses. It is frequently difficult to identify the source of Joyce’s narrative in terms of a coherent consciousness, to play what Bersani has called “the literary-criticism version of hide and seek” (Bersani 159). While this game has certainly preoccupied critics of Ulysses it is reasonable to suggest that at times Joyce aimed for the unidentifiable, author-less voice, and that this rhetorical structure was familiar to him through the world of advertising. The nameless, collective voice of Berlin in Döblin’s Berlin Alexanderplatz is one of the many textual features of that novel that operates as an homage to Joyce’s writing, yet it is also an homage to advertising. Osteen has related this free-floating acceptance of a communication process without origin or true destination to Jameson’s concept of seriality, of which advertising can be seen to be the most definitive manifestation. Jameson’s expression of this experience sounds eerily like that of the Mass: “the uniqueness of my own experience is undermined by a secret anonymity, a statistical quality. Somehow I feel that I am no longer central, that I am merely doing just what everybody else is doing. But...everybody else feels exactly the same way” (qtd. in Osteen 723). In this way advertising’s serial mode of operation supersedes that of the communal experience of the Mass, to generate an experience of mass communication artificially presented as a mode of individuation and potential identity consolidation. The sense of self-identity constantly utilised in the ad is endlessly deferred as the contemporary consumer’s psychological space becomes a theatre in which he/she has no choice over the action, which is scripted elsewhere by an unspecified source. This is the fate of Gerty MacDowell, perhaps the most explicit manifestation of the crisis of contemporary subjecthood, prompted by the very advertisements that promise salvation from just that crisis.

This issue of subjectivity relates the metaphoric private sphere of mental space to the consonant colonisations of religion, and the developing advertising industry and the capitalist system for which it is the “filthiest ramp” as well as the most ubiquitous manifestation. However, it could be suggested that the process of colonisation by advertisements, echoing the colonisation by ritualised religion, also occurs in the broadest political sense. Just as Protestantism is articulated in Joyce as the religion of the colonising British, so advertising may

be seen in a similar way. Wicke has claimed that “the transcendent promises of Catholic theology and ritual, and the promissory form and communal metaphysics of advertising intersect, particularly in a colonized Catholic country where such ideology always has a political subtext” (148). Wicke sees Bloom’s job as ad canvasser as something of a historical anachronism, a role that, for Britain, has been replaced by the more efficient technologies of advertising agencies. The Dublin of 1904, in this understanding, lags behind the progressive consolidation of commercial advertisement as a fully-fledged industry, which is well under way in Britain, as Smith notes in his memoirs. The products that circulate in Bloom’s text are generally those with a British or American source. Wicke offers Epps Cocoa, Plumtree’s Potted Meat, Pear’s Soap and Crown Derby porcelain as some significant examples (Wicke 129). Dublin is in this way colonised by ads originating in London or beyond, leaving only local needs to be mopped up by the personal and ad hoc attentions of Bloom. Osteen suggests that the Keyes ad that absorbs Bloom’s efforts in the “Aeolus” episode is an instance in which political issues of colonisation are subsumed in the generation of the urge to purchase (Osteen 733). However, elsewhere issues of colonisation remain unreferenced, and yet the stream of advertisements that offer consumer salvation to the people of Dublin are, essentially, a colonising force. They even operate according to psychologically manipulative structures borrowed from the more explicitly imported forms of the Catholic faith. The land battle for mental space here finds an echo in the more literally geographic issue of political colonisation.

### **Madam, I’m Adman: Bloom’s Resistant Reading**

Despite being a historical anachronism, Bloom as adman performs a key function within Joyce’s Dublin. Peculiarly poised between implication in the advertising industry, as a canvasser of ads, and resistance to that system, as a reader and re-interpreter of such ads, Bloom’s enthusiasm for and knowledge of the operations of advertising permeate the text. Thus while Bloom is by profession involved in the filthy ramp of advertising, his reading practices enable him to distance himself from the appeal of the ad. The novel uses Bloom to introduce the flotsam and jetsam of the capitalist system, as well as to read and re-read it in a way that exposes its tactics. It is precisely Bloom’s professional knowledge that enables him to uncover the strategies of influence at work in the ads he visually consumes on his path through the city. It also enables him to extrapolate these observations beyond the sphere of commercial consumption, and he is able to view parallel manipulations of subjectivity at work in religious ritual. Bloom, for all his



enthusiasm, is not a pliant supplicant in front of the ad. In fact, as this enthusiasm relates to the mechanics of influence and control, the possibility of supplicancy is not present. Instead, Bloom consumes the ad, dismantles its phrases, stores elements in his memory, and redistributes the text around the city via his own conscious or unconscious mind. It is due to this re-evaluative process of reading that Wicke has suggested that “Bloom is both a conduit for the language of advertising and a reshaper of it. It directs his gaze, determines the trajectory of his desire, yet is re-written or revised in internal colloquy as well” (134). Bloom’s role makes explicit the tendency of the ad to live on in the consciousness of the consumer. The transportability of the urge to purchase is a key aim of any effective ad. When Bloom’s musings cause an ad to reappear in temporally and geographically distant locations, he is reenacting the ad in a modified form elsewhere. While this recalls the serial nature of the ad, which always obliquely refers to the fact that it is one instance among many, and therefore operates as a kind of portal through city space, Bloom’s re-reading breaks this seriality, as mere fragments linger on, often freed from any consumption imperative.

Bloom and advertising are a “capital couple” (571): an effective and enthusiastic partnership, one negotiated through the development of capitalism into a commodity-centred form, and one played out in a specifically urban context. Bloom’s readership or visual consumption of advertising helps him to formulate his peripatetic poetics of walking, and he comes to generate a kind of micro-text, a story of quotidian praxis on the streets. Ads, in their turn, are allied to the panorama-text of contemporary capitalism in the early twentieth century. Indeed, Joyce’s novel comes to dramatise the fact that it is commodity capitalism that is the driving force behind the panorama-text, and its spatio-textual technologies of both the ad and the newspaper. Beneath this panorama-text, opaque stories struggle to exist, such is the spatial, and psycho-spatial, colonising power of the ad or newspaper. Establishing a subjectivity that rejects the insidiously flexible consumer image of the ad, and refuses to allow commerce to attempt a colonisation of mental space in an echo of the operations of religion, is a great challenge. It is one that Gerty MacDowell has utterly failed to achieve. Her attempts to distinguish herself from others, particularly from other young women in the marriage market, turn her into the very locus of ideological manipulation in commercial advertising: the seaside girl. Baudrillard has suggested that ads, in distinguishing between parity products, operate as manifestations of “*the industrial production of differences*” (88), the only option of distinction that is left to Gerty. In



fact, Baudrillard suggests that this production of differences might perhaps “serve as the most cogent definition of the *system of consumption*” (88).

Ulysses is saturated with evidence for the developing stranglehold of consumer society, a society whose greatest challenge is the construction of a coherent identity or story. Ads at once precipitate this difficulty and suggest that they might facilitate its assuagement. They at once offer individuation, through ideal, generalised, ubiquitously specific selves, and an amelioration of the anxious experience of urban life in the early twentieth century. Commodity capitalism therefore both causes and offers to salve contemporary anxiety in a self-reinforcing system with its own internal logic. This macrocosmic model can also be seen on the microcosmic level of the ad: consumer desire is both created and potentially sated (through the expected purchase) within the single instance of advertising. Dramatising the attempted perpetuation of the word-city of commodity capitalism, and its technologies of the spatialised texts of newspapers and ads, Joyce offers two potential destinies of the contemporary urban consumer of commercial texts. In the case of Gerty, subjectivity is stifled under the industrial production of differences that attempts to mask the ubiquity of the ad’s apparently specific appeal. In the case of Bloom, however, an understanding of the mechanics of ads and newspaper texts results in a readerly peripateticism that generates a long poem of ad-saturated walking that is resistant to the position of supplicant, and enables the exposition of the true operations of the word-city.

## Chapter Five

### Haptic Texts

#### Joseph Frank and Aloïs Riegl

The modernist city, revolutionised in form, pace and character by economic development, calls for radical new depictions of its realities. As the preceding chapters have made clear, such depictions may be conveyed through the medium of the transformed practices of modernist plastic art, through newspapers, through advertisements and through literary innovation. In fact, the latter registers the effects of the shifting technologies and conceptualisations of these other media. As chapter two demonstrates via an analysis of cubist art in relation to textual practice, art forms were subject to cross-pollination in terms of both ideas and formal developments within the modernist period. This chapter will argue that, for representations of the urban environment at this time, the most relevant notion to transfer across art forms is that of the haptic. This concept, originating in art historical analysis of the late nineteenth century but subsequently most extensively applied to the cinema, comes to inform the modernist novel. The haptic may be defined as the foregrounding of sensory experience, and in particular the sense of touch. This chapter aims to suggest that the common hapticity of the cinema and the modernist novel is in fact the cause behind many critics' observations that several key avant-garde writers are experimentally "cinematic" in their literary style.

The modernist authors who are perhaps most frequently referred to as making use of a cinematic style are James Joyce, Virginia Woolf and Dorothy Richardson. In an article entitled "Flaubert to Joyce: Evolution of a Cinematographic Form," Alan Spiegel claims that Ulysses "represents a new stage in the development of the cinematographic tendencies already noted in the 'late' James and Conrad" (Spiegel 240). Dorothy Richardson's style is described by Kristin Bluemel as "an exercise in making words do what is more commonly accomplished by the [. . .] camera" (Bluemel 136). While Bluemel is referring to an early sketch entitled "A Sussex Auction," she does see this development of form as part of the construction of Richardson's novel sequence Pilgrimage. Winifred Bryher, Richardson's fellow writer for the film journal Close Up, noted, in a 1931 review of Richardson's novel Dawn's Left Hand (part of the Pilgrimage sequence), that it would make, if filmed, "The real English film for which so many are waiting" (Bryher 210). She goes on to note that it "begins (as perhaps all films should) in a railway carriage. [. . .] And in each page an aspect

of London is created that like an image from a film, substitutes itself for memory" (210). Both travel and memory figure large in any understanding of Richardson's representations of the urban in Pilgrimage, and that these were identified at an earlier stage is testament to the enthusiasms of Bryher as a reader. References to the cinematic style of Woolf, in particular in Mrs. Dalloway, are numerous.<sup>1</sup>

These three writers were, of course, drawing on a fascination with, and considerable experience of, the cinema in their own lives. Woolf's attitude to the form is perhaps the most ambivalent, but in itself this stance produced a notable essay, "The Cinema," written in 1926.<sup>2</sup> While Woolf's fascination with technology focused more enthusiastically upon the gramophone and the motorcar, both Richardson and Joyce can be seen as evangelists for the latest developments in film. Richardson wrote extensively for Close Up, a journal which aimed to explore the possibilities of cinema as art. She gave consideration to silent films and, grudgingly, to talkies, and was interested in commercial "movies," as well as films with supposedly more complex artistic aspirations. Her regular column "Continuous Performance" is clearly written by an avid cinemagoer and, as this chapter will explore, she figures these visits as an experience verging on the spiritual. Joyce famously established the "Cinematograph Volta" at 45 Mary Street, Dublin, which opened on 20 December 1909. This was the first permanent cinema in Dublin, inspired, reports Richard Ellmann, by Joyce's sister Eva's complaints about the lack of such entertainment in the city (Ellmann 38). Joyce was at this time living in Trieste, more blessed by cinemas than Dublin, including one, a particular favourite of Joyce's, which was also named the "Volta." The Dublin cinema venture collapsed in 1910, yet by 1922, thirty-seven cinemas were operating in the city.<sup>3</sup> The price for the forward-thinking nature of Joyce's evangelism was failure. It had been a labour of love, as his letters home to Nora Barnacle in Trieste show: "I am exhausted with this business here. Last night I was not in bed till near five between letters and advertisements and telegrams" (Joyce, "Letter 10 Dec." 187). These advertisements were ultimately to be used to decorate the kitchen of Joyce's home, such was his dedication to, and enthusiasm for, this project: "I hope you have put the posters in the kitchen. I intend to paper it week by week with the programmes" ("Letter 23 Dec." 193).

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<sup>1</sup> The most recent study to directly address Woolf's cinematic style is Maggie Humm's Modernist Women and Visual Cultures: Virginia Woolf, Vanessa Bell, Photography and Cinema.

<sup>2</sup> This essay was first published in the Nation, under the title "Movies and Reality," in the same year.

<sup>3</sup> See Dublin Department of Justice.

The Spiegel article quoted above is of particular interest due to its obvious, although uncited, indebtedness to Joseph Frank's seminal "Spatial Form in Modern Literature." This article was published in the Sewanee Review in 1945, and attempted a reassessment of Gotthold Ephraim Lessing's 1766 essay "Laokoon, or, the Limits of Painting and Poetry." Revisiting "Laokoon," Frank surveys the literature of the early decades of the twentieth century, and asks whether Lessing's distinctions between the arts still hold good. Frank quotes Lessing's key claim:

If it is true [. . .] that painting and poetry in their imitations make use of entirely different means or symbols – the first, namely, of form and colour in space, the second of articulated sounds in time – if these symbols indisputably require a suitable relation to the thing symbolized, then it is clear that symbols arranged in juxtaposition can only express subjects of which the wholes or parts [. . .] are themselves consecutive (qtd. in Frank 223).

Lessing thus establishes a strict distinction between forms. He observes the spatial nature of the plastic arts, in which objects will be represented juxtaposed "in an instant of time" (Frank 223), that is to say simultaneously. By contrast, literature "makes use of language, composed of a succession of words proceeding through time; and it follows that literary form, to harmonize with the essential quality of its medium, must be based primarily on some form of narrative sequence" (Frank 223). Frank's summary makes clear that Lessing not only distinguishes between the operational modes of the art forms he describes, but also establishes a rule as to the appropriate subject matter for those art forms, given the manner in which they choose to represent reality. Frank's crucial identification of the transgression of this boundary between the simultaneity of the plastic arts and the sequential nature of literature is the source of subsequent critical interest in his essay. He suggests that modernist literature, in exploring the bounds of narrative form, develops a formal means of constructing a spatial text. The prompt for such a turn toward the spatial in modernist writing is the subject range now dealt with by authors of the avant-garde, a fact with which Frank deals, albeit implicitly. Lessing's belief in the natural connection between an art form and its subject matter is, to a degree, left in place by Frank. The topics now dealt with by modernist authors include the depiction of the mental sphere, the unconscious mind and, crucially, the experience of urban life. Far from offering to the senses a narrative sequence, the modernist city can be said to bombard the observer with juxtaposed impressions. Modernist urban life lacks a sense of linear narrative coherence, making juxtaposition and montage the most relevant and accurate strategies for its representation – hence the rise of the newspaper as the ideal reflection of the urban sphere, as explored in chapter three.

This experience of life as fragmented and juxtaposed by the clamour of the urban environment was most famously outlined by Georg Simmel in "The Metropolis and Mental Life" (1903). He speaks of "the intensification of nervous stimulation which results from the swift and uninterrupted change of outer and inner stimuli" (Simmel 175). In fact, it is the bewildering force of such juxtaposed sensations in the city that accounts, claims Simmel, for the blasé attitude of the city dweller: "through the rapidity and contradictoriness of their changes, more harmless impressions force such violent responses, tearing the nerves so brutally hither and thither that their last reserves of strength are spent" (178). Simmel comes closest to the connection between urban life and the juxtaposition of elements of sensation or experience when he claims that "stimulation, interests, uses of time and consciousness are offered to it [the city personality] from all sides" (184). Frank notes that Lessing "attempts to prove that the Greeks, with an unflinching sense of esthetic propriety, respected the limits imposed on different art mediums by the conditions of human perception" (224). Thus Lessing knew that the capacities of human perception had an effect upon the boundaries of the art form, and its operation upon those senses. Yet if Simmel is to be believed, the industrialised city is prompting human sensory capacities to be tried on an unprecedented level. It is reasonable to suggest that if something different is being asked of the human faculties, then art, the means through which humanity comes to understand itself, will in its turn be altered. As Frank summarises: "For Lessing [. . .] esthetic form [. . .] is the relation between the sensuous nature of the art medium and the conditions of human perception" (225). If the conditions of such perception have changed, so the faculties will change, and the art that seeks to engage those faculties, and to adequately express the contemporary environment or "conditions of human perception," will also change. In this way, the conditions of life in a given age will demand a particular form of representation through artistic means; the early twentieth century demands, then, a haptic literary output. Or, as Ezra Pound puts it in Hugh Selwyn Mauberley (1920): "The 'age demanded' [...] / A prose kinema" (Pound 174).

Frank's key claim is "that modern literature, exemplified by such writers as T.S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, Marcel Proust and James Joyce, is moving in the direction of spatial form" (225). Such spatial form comes to "undermine the inherent consecutiveness of language" (Frank 227), that is to say it escapes the restriction to linear narrative flow that Lessing saw as crucial to an understanding of the nature of literature. This chapter will explore this movement "in the direction of spatial form," not primarily in the work of those writers listed by Frank, but in two writers whose concern with spatial narratives conspicuously reflects



their attempts to depict the modernist city: Dorothy Richardson and Virginia Woolf. Furthermore, these writers make use of the haptic in order to emphasise the spatial elements of their narratives. For both writers, an engagement with the plastic form of the cinema may be seen as a key source for this hapticity, so boldly transferred to the narrative realm. The question of the cinema is briefly mentioned by Frank when he describes the country fair scene of Madame Bovary, in which Flaubert makes use of “a method we might as well call cinematographic, since this analogy comes immediately to mind” (230). Later, Frank compares Joyce to Flaubert, suggesting that he “frequently makes use of the same method as Flaubert – cutting back and forth between different actions occurring at the same time” (233). Frank is of course describing Ulysses, and seems to attribute the Joycean/Flaubertian cinematographic method to, in this instance, the difficulties of representing the urban milieu. Joyce, claims Frank, “had the problem of creating this impression of simultaneity for the life of a whole teeming city” (233). This interconnection, between an experimentally spatialised narrative form, the formal precedent of the cinema, and the demands of representation brought about by the contemporary city and its assault upon the senses, is never explicitly stated by Frank, but it certainly runs beneath the surface of his argument.

Spiegel, too, begins with a reading of the country fair scene in Flaubert’s Madame Bovary. He also makes use of the term “cinematographic.” However, Spiegel describes his project as an exploration of “the reification of narrative form” (229), a term which does not arise in Frank’s piece. For Spiegel, reified form is “the form that presents and portrays rather than comments and explains,” and he aims to investigate how this reification of form enables the literary text to present “*an action that is seen*,” facilitating a visualisation of “literary space” (230). While literary space has been one of the concerns of this thesis throughout, this chapter will make clear that it is mobilised in the most radical manner by Woolf and Richardson when they attempt to represent urban space, and when such a representation aims to offer not merely a description, but an experience. Moving on to Proust, Frank describes that author’s literary intentions as follows: “And not only should the world learn about these experiences indirectly, by reading a descriptive account of them, but, through his novel, it would feel their impact on the sensibility as Proust himself had felt it” (235). The word “sensibility” here floats somewhere between literary taste, emotional response and sensory experience. Frank is claiming that Proust facilitates an experience on the part of the reader, a reading confirmed when he later describes Proust’s writing as “at once the vehicle through which he conveyed his vision and the concrete substance of that vision shaped by a method which compels the reader to re-experience its exact effect” (237). This suggestion may be

compared to Spiegel's concept of "reification." The extraordinary capacity of the modernist text to enable a readerly experience through the spatialisation of text is the subject of this chapter.

That the words "vehicle" and "conveyed" should crop up in Frank's reading of Proust is apt, since it will time and again be seen that it is movement or travelling that shifts the texts into this zone of the haptic, where a sensory experience, or re-experience, of the action of the narrative is enabled.<sup>4</sup> That the words used to describe modernist literature in its newly spatial glory, those used to offer accounts of the radical new plastic art of the cinema, and those detailing the sensory experience of the city dweller should create multiple resonances across these fields will become increasingly clear. For now it is worth noting that the haptic sense, the predominance of touch, leads us not only in the direction of physical experience, but also to the notion of a "touching" psychological experience, an emotional response that echoes the Proustian appeal to "sensibility." As Giuliana Bruno notes in the title of the work in which she relies heavily on the haptic, Atlas of Emotion: Journeys in Art, Architecture and Film, the word "emotion" not only contains but is closely and productively related to the word "motion." Thus psychological responses are prompted by motion – by transport. As mentioned above, means of transport in the city are crucial in bringing about the hapticity of the modernist text. It can be no coincidence, therefore, that transport as a term also operates to denote a psychological or spiritual flight to other realms or plains of experience.

The haptic, then, plays out in the ground between a psychological or mental experience of described space facilitated by a newly spatial modernist literature (first coherently described by Frank), a touching experience, engaging the emotions and the consciousness of the individual, and an experience of touch or physical/bodily sensation. Adding motion to the picture or, rather, to the text, always brings hapticity into play. The complex interaction between these terms and their attendant concepts will be explored in this chapter, while the question of the haptic is seen to shift from the cinema with which Woolf and Richardson were fascinated, into their innovative and captivating literary texts. Transposing the notion of hapticity from theorisations of art and cinema thus offers a new way of looking at depictions of city space within the modernist literature of the avant-garde. Such formal developments

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<sup>4</sup> It is important to note that, despite the prevalence of references to Proust in relation to questions of cinematographic form, the writer made clear his own objections to such a reading of literature in the third chapter of Time Regained, where Marcel states that "Some critics now liked to regard the novel as a sort of procession of things upon the screen of a cinematograph. This comparison was absurd. Nothing is further from what we have really perceived than the vision that the cinematograph presents" (Proust 245).

within the literary sphere are demanded by new spatialities, and the haptic allows a new form of spatial depiction on the part of the writer, and reception on the part of the reader. The vital work of depicting the contemporary city brings about a haptic element in the novel, ultimately prompting the creation of spatialised texts. Yet this is not just spatialised text as explored in the preceding newspaper chapter, with its focus upon the lay-out of the page as a correlate to the urban environment. Instead, an appreciation of the hapticity of the modernist text involves an understanding of the text as facilitating the reader's own imaginative spatial experience. Bruno claims that, in the cinema, a shift from the optic to the haptic is a shift toward the habitable (Bruno, *Atlas* 250). Can we, then, say that modernist literature makes the shift from the (formerly temporally constrained) text toward the habitable space? If so, then the modernist novel, at its most radical, offers a space which the writer of the city renders as potentially, imaginatively, "lived in" by the reader.

### **Film Theory and the Concept of the Haptic**

Hidden in a footnote of Frank's essay, and customarily overlooked by criticism, is a key to where this journey toward an understanding of the haptic condition of modernist narrative might begin:

German art criticism, in the last few decades, has experienced a veritable renaissance along the lines marked out by Lessing, although he seems to have had no direct influence on these writers. Numerous efforts have been made to trace the evolution of esthetic forms – usually called style by the Germans – by establishing certain categories of perception and correlating these with various climates of feeling and opinion. Among these critics, perhaps the best known is William Worringer (240).

William Worringer (1881 – 1965), whose debt to Lessing Frank leaves unclear, was certainly indebted to another thinker on the nature of art, and the father of the concept of the haptic in artistic practice: Aloïs Riegl. Riegl's notion of the *kunstwollen* explained shifts in the artistic styles of historical civilisations via an appreciation of shifts in the spatial perceptions of those civilisations. His contribution to art historical knowledge is therefore obliquely referenced in Frank's mention of "certain categories of perception" and "various climates of feeling and opinion." This of course links back in turn to Lessing's interest in the Greek division of arts according to the human faculties of perception, an interest that seems to be fully developed in the following century by the fascinating work of Riegl. Antonia Lant, writing on "haptical cinema," confirms the influence of Riegl on Worringer, describing Riegl's *Problems of Style* of 1893 and *Late Roman Art Industry* of 1901 as "foundational texts for [. . .] Wilhelm Worringer" amongst others (Lant 47). As Lant reports, Worringer's

Egyptian Art (1927) concluded that “the problem of the history of the genesis of space” was “truly a modern one. Only for men of today could the question of the essence of spatiality become one of such actuality for the history of the spirit. We moderns were the first who could find in this any problem at all” (qtd. in Lant 49). Worringer suggests that the question of space is “truly modern,” and yet he means, more narrowly, “truly modernist,” and thus consonant with the rise of the cinema in a way that draws the attention of Lant. Worringer ascribes the modernist interest in spatial form in the artistic sphere to, as Lant has it, “the impact of modernist images, the proliferation of mass-cultural materials, the explosion of new ‘cultures of import,’ and shifts in urban experience” (49). This list of contributory factors in the foregrounding of the question of space chimes with the interests of this chapter, and indeed the contentions of this thesis, and Worringer is perceptive when he dates the origin of the question within the modernist period. However, the foregoing work of Riegl must not be overlooked, providing as it does a notion of the haptic that is crucial to an understanding of twentieth century art forms.

In his consideration of the paintings of Francis Bacon, Gilles Deleuze picks up the story of Riegl, and makes use of his terminology of the haptic in describing the “*violent manual space*” of Bacon’s oeuvre (Deleuze 127).<sup>5</sup> It is Bacon’s status as “an Egyptian,” a painter of form and ground on a single plane, which makes this haptic designation an appropriate one (Deleuze 135). Deleuze suggests that strategies of painting employed by Bacon create a modification of a tactile-optical space, in which properties of touch are subsumed within the look of the eye (154-5). Deleuze’s recognition of the significance of Riegl and his concept of the haptic highlights the importance sight/touch confluence that occurs within the visual arts from ancient times to the present day. This confluence is something of a hidden story within the cultural criticism of the twentieth century and beyond, and Riegl makes a vital starting point for its exploration.

Riegl scholarship has frequently focused on his conceptualisation of epochal shifts in spatial perception and the consequent art forms that result within those epochs – his notion of the *kunstwollen*. As Margaret Iversen has explained: “For Riegl, different stylistic types, understood as expressions of a varying *kunstwollen*, are read as different ideals of perception or as different ways of regarding the mind’s relationship to its objects and of organizing the

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<sup>5</sup> Deleuze is, however, inaccurate in his suggestion that Riegl “coined” the word *haptisch* in response to criticism (Deleuze 195). While Riegl did seek a new way of describing the role of touch in ancient art, he openly admits that he takes his revised terminology from the field of physiology (Riegl, “Late” 190). See also below.

material of perception. Art displays people's awareness of the mind/world or subject/object relationship" (Iversen 8). Influential as this notion has been, it is the less frequently discussed work on the haptic that Riegl completed in his writing on Egyptian art which is crucial to subsequent readings of the cinema and, ultimately, to an understanding of the modernist avant-garde text. For Riegl, the Egyptian culture is a key subject of study, offering the starting point for what he sees as a shift from a planar to a perspectival means of spatial representation in art, as well as a shift from haptical to optical human perception and thus a major shift in the *kunstwollen* (Lant 50). Planar art of the Egyptian period that requires an appreciation at close quarters and invites touch thus gives way to a more distanced optical engagement that gives the illusion of depth. Riegl's understanding of his contemporary era as optically focused in its perceptions of works of art is challenged by Lant, by the cinema theorist Noël Burch, and also by Walter Benjamin, on whom Riegl exerted considerable influence. Yet his descriptions of the haptic mode of perception in an art historical context are a crucial starting point for the story of the haptic's transfer to other fields of modernist artistic endeavour.

Riegl, in an important essay entitled "Late Roman or Oriental?" (1902), notes that "It is only finally the sense of touch that can inform us about [. . .] the relative impenetrability of things. [. . .] It is thus in any case essentially through the sense of touch that we experience the true quality, the depth and delimitation of objects in nature and works of art" (Riegl, "Late" 181). In a footnote of the same essay, Riegl explains the alteration of his terminology in which he makes use of the term "haptic" in place of the more conventional "tactile": "It has been objected that this designation could lead to misunderstandings [. . .] and my intention has been drawn to the fact that physiology has long since introduced the more fitting designation 'haptic' (from *haptēin-fasten*)" (190). Benjamin applies this notion of a haptic art to the cinema, drawing upon Riegl but reversing his *kunstwollen* teleology such that hapticity becomes the expression of modernity, in his much-discussed essay "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" (Benjamin 216-7). Lant neatly summarises Benjamin's description of the cinema as haptic, as having to do with touch, a claim that at once is counter-intuitive, and yet describes the particular impact of this new medium in modernity: "Benjamin inverted Riegl's dialectic: in cinema, although it had no actual tactile properties of its own (in the dark the screen offers no modulated surface to feel), the shock effect of the bombardment of spectators by images was physical, quite unlike the contemplative relation of the viewer to a work of art that relied on distance for its aura and effect" (68). From Frank's re-reading of Lessing, to the footnoted Worringer, to the foregoing explorations of Riegl, to Benjamin's understanding of the cinema, to Lant's



terminology of a “haptical cinema,” a circuitous path is drawn that sees the haptic as central to modernist cinema. It is also central, as Lant’s summary of Benjamin’s reading implies in its reference to Simmelian bombardment, to an experience of urban modernity. For Benjamin, cinema’s form is thus “primarily tactile, being based on changes of place and focus which periodically assail the spectator” (231).<sup>6</sup> Exploring more closely the precise ways in which cinema might be thought of as haptic will clarify the ways in which this common root in modernist urban experience makes the haptic a vital category not only for the cinema but for the avant-garde text in this period.

The Oxford English Dictionary defines “haptic” as both a noun and an adjective denoting something “Of, pertaining to, or relating to the sense of touch or tactile sensations [. . .]. Having a greater dependence on sensations of touch than on sight, esp. as a means of psychological orientation” (OED). The earliest citation given in support of this definition is from a medical dictionary of 1890, confirming Riegl’s contention that his source for the term is the field of “physiology.” A 1939 quotation from the journal Mind suggests that the haptic is a designation indicating a combination of two streams of information: “There is the notion of pure ‘touch’, and there are ‘kinæsthetic experiences’, and we can have the one without the other; but when we speak of ‘the world of touch’, or ‘tactile æsthetics’, we are referring to the data provided by an intimate combination of them both and for this sense Prof. Révész uses the adjective ‘haptic’” (OED). The mention of kinaesthesia is pertinent to an attempt to understand how the haptic is applied in cinema theory, since the haptic sense is in this context used to denote not simply touch in terms of an intentional reaching and touching but the appreciation of movement by the body as a whole. The fundamental connection between hapticity and moving pictures is explored most comprehensively in the work of Bruno, and most persistently in the aforementioned Atlas of Emotion.... Bruno’s own definition of the haptic is worth quoting at length:

As the Greek etymology tells us, haptic means ‘able to come into contact with.’ As a function of the skin, then, the haptic – the sense of touch – constitutes the reciprocal *contact* between us and the environment, both housing and extending communicative interface. But the haptic is also related to kinesthesia, the ability of our bodies to sense their own movement in space. [. . .] this book considers the haptic to be an agent in the formation of space – both geographic and cultural – and, by extension, in the articulation of the spatial arts themselves,

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<sup>6</sup> David B. Clarke has suggested that the haptic nature of the cinema is, as implied by Benjamin, a consequence of its simulacral rather than representational status, i.e. its status as a mechanically reproduced work of art. This may be related in a distant manner to the tendency of the Proustian text of sensibility, or the modernist text of the haptic, to facilitate an experience on the part of the reader, rather than represent that experience for the distanced perusal of the reader, as suggested in the introduction to this chapter. See Clarke.

which include motion pictures. [. . .] Here, the haptic realm is shown to play a tangible, *tactical* role in our communicative “sense” of spatiality and motility, thus shaping the texture of habitable space and, ultimately, mapping our ways of being in touch with the environment (6).

Several terms within this helpful definition are of particular importance. Firstly, Bruno echoes the Mind article in her mention of the kinaesthetic sense, the ability of the human body to perceive motion. Secondly, she sees the haptic, i.e. the haptic body, to be a creator of space as well as a perceiver of it in a way that recalls Lefebvre’s contentions about the spatially generative abilities of the body (see chapter one). In addition, both the Lefebvrian connection and the suggestion that human bodies are able to “sense their own movement in space” imply a phenomenological heritage, one which is also indicated by the OED’s use of the term “orientation.” Finally, Bruno writes of the “habitable” nature of space thus perceived, an early gesture toward her more complex claim that a shift toward the haptic is a shift toward the habitable, a theory carrying Heideggerian echoes in its suggestion of emplacement. The mention of “environment,” which underscores the concern with habitation, may also be a reference to the work of American psychologist James Jerome Gibson’s ecological model of sense perception, outlined in The Perception of the Visual World (1950) and The Senses Considered as Perceptual Systems (1966). This model notes the importance of the surrounding environment as a determinant for what is perceived, and refers to the mobile observer (Rodaway 19-20). Gibson also draws attention to the crucial secondary meaning of the faculty of the haptic as an ability to perceive the movement of the body (Rodaway 42). The haptic, for Bruno, is a reciprocal touching between the human body and its environment which enables the apprehension of an environment, the creation of a space, a sense of bodily motion and an inhabitation or emplacement. How this works in a cinematic context is a complex story.

Bruno claims that “As a form of panoramic wallpaper, cinema had its spatial roots in the new ‘fashions’ of spatiality that marked the rise of modernity” (171). Further, “The eye/I that was designing – ‘fashioning’ – the new visions was a traveling one, which craved spatial expansion. [. . .] The new sensibility engaged the physicality of the observer, challenging her ability to take in space and more space – a mobilized space” (171). Aside from the reiteration of the connection between hapticity and the mobile observer, and the reference to “sensibility” that loads Proust’s term with an extra dose of the sensory, the key claim of this passage is the connection between fashions of spatiality and modernity. The appetite for space-based entertainments stems, claims Bruno, from the eighteenth century production of the haptic consciousness, and reaches its high point in the cinema of the

modernist epoch, an apex of the project of modernity. Opening up the human sensorium from a restriction to the visual to a broader account of physicality, the haptic mode of perception perceives mobilised space, the motion pictures of the cinema. Bruno goes on to note the consonance between film language and descriptions of travel or travel space, further emphasising the connection between movement and haptic perception, and placing cinema firmly within a broader history of moving pictures. Bruno observes that “traveling” is the word used by the French for camera movement, while circular camera movement around an axis is, for the French, *panoramique*, and for the English a panning shot. The Anglo-Americanism “tracking shot,” she claims, recalls the tracks used to move the camera, in its turn reminding one of train travel (172). The implication of Bruno’s observation about the connection between the technical terminology of film and descriptions of travel is that this connection is born out of a common root in the interrelation between movement and spatial experience. Further, such spatial experience as is offered by the cinema is seen as the endpoint of a historically extended trend for valuing the experience of travel: “Such cinematic motion descends genealogically from the traveling history of spatial phenomenology – that is, from the fascination for views and the physical hunger for space that led the subject from vista to vista in an extended search for urban and spatial emotion” (172).

Bruno’s richly metaphorical and multivalent language moves between registers and disciplines, unpicking common origins for seemingly disparate cultural fashions or modes of seeing. In the latter quotation, the reference to “*urban and spatial emotion*” (my emphasis) is the first moment where Bruno establishes the link between a city context, spatiality and an experience that is not only concerned with touch in terms of the physical experience of hapticity, but with the touching, i.e. the emotional. Thus while Bruno, Gibson, Prof. Révész and the *OED* agree that the haptic combines the sense of touch with a broader ability of the human body to perceive its own motion, it must also be noted that the haptic sense is activated by travel and spatial experience, and that such experience may be emotional as well as physically sensory, an emotional journey brought about by a moving picture. As Bruno explains, “Motion pictures – the realm of (e)motion – wed the voyage of the analytical imagination to the pursuit of sensual pleasures. The diverse geographic directions of early modernity merged in film’s haptic way of picturing and experiencing space” (173). Bruno favours the term “motion pictures” as the denotation that foregrounds the importance of travel or movement in the cinema’s form of representation. This particular phrase also gives emphasis to the dual response of the spectator in terms of a sensual or physical

response of the body, and an emotional response of the mind. In this complex manner, the experience of the cinema spectator is that of emotional transport – a notion that will be central to this chapter's consideration of modernist literary texts, since the work of both Richardson and Woolf includes the emotional experience of an engagement with psychological space, as well as the careful recording and foregrounding of the physical experience of an engagement with the concrete spaces of the city.

Considering techniques of mapping through the ages, Bruno comes to consider the bird's-eye view, which she describes as "a permeable place of encounters between the map and the landscape [. . .]. Often dismissed as a teleological perspective [. . .] the bird's-eye view bears reconsideration: it was not a totalizing perspective" (177). This statement immediately calls to mind De Certeau's claims about the God's-eye view from the top of the World Trade Center, as outlined in *The Practice of Everyday Life* (De Certeau 92-3).<sup>7</sup> Implicitly arguing against De Certeau's distinction between this God's-eye view and the ground level tactical texts of the *wandersmänner*, Bruno reclaims the map of the bird's-eye view for her extended history of spatial entertainments: "This imagined dislocated view, made possible much later by the spatiovisual techniques of cinema, attempted to free vision from a singular, fixed viewpoint, imaginatively mobilizing visual space. The scene of the bird's-eye view staged a fabricated spatial observation that opened the door to narrative space" (177). Within this description lie hints as to the possibility of transferring the concept of the haptic from a cinema context to the literary texts of modernity. Eschewing a singular, fixed viewpoint, such literary works imaginatively mobilise visual space in a textual context, opening the door to narrative space or, rather, a spatial narrative. Woolf's essay "Flying Over London" is perhaps the point at which the contiguity between her experiments in literary content and form come closest to the theoretical work of Bruno. An account of an imaginary flight over London and its surrounding countryside, the essay uses a bird's-eye view, as well as suggestively cinematic techniques of panning shot, close-up, and montage structure:

For a time we were muffled in the clouds. Then the fairy earth appeared, lying far far below, a mere slice or knife blade of colour floating. It rose towards us with extreme speed, broadening and lengthening; forests appeared on it and seas [. . .]. Nearer and nearer we came together and had again the whole of civilization spread beneath us, silent, empty, like a demonstration made for our instruction; the river with the steamers that bring coal and iron; the churches, the factories, the railways. Nothing moved; nobody worked the machine, until

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<sup>7</sup> While Bruno does not explicitly refer to De Certeau in this text, she did argue against the totalising nature of the God's-eye view in a paper entitled "The Art of Viewing: Film, City Views, and the Geography of Modernity," given at the conference *Visualising the City*, University of Manchester.

in some field on the outskirts of London one saw a dot actually and certainly move ("Flying" 190).

Woolf's work will be further considered below, but for now it should be noted that imaginative spatial experience is here being facilitated by transport and deployed in text through means of cinematic techniques. It is also pertinent to observe the consonance between Woolf's "mere slice or knife blade" and Benjamin's description of the cinematic camera as being comparable to the progress of a surgeon's scalpel through the body (Benjamin 226-227). Woolf's use of the phrase refers to the "fairy earth," of course, but this terminology also applies to the overall literary method she undertakes in "Flying over London." This fact is drawn out by a subsequent comment of Benjamin's: "The Painter maintains in his work a natural distance from reality, the cameraman penetrates deeply into its web. There is tremendous difference in the pictures they obtain. That of the painter is a total one, that of the cameraman consists of multiple fragments which are assembled under a new law" (227). While Woolf's aeroplane-enabled viewpoint would perhaps suggest the total picture of the painter, her cinematic methods in fact make her a nearer neighbour of the cameraman/surgeon, and in this way she reinforces Bruno's contention that the bird's-eye view is not a totalising picture but a spatial experience.

Crucially, Bruno challenges the notion of film as the heir of Renaissance perspectivism, upon which much academic work on the cinematic apparatus has focused. Instead, she claims, "we can set the invention of film against a different panorama [. . .] that tends away from perspectivism and toward a tactile view of space. 'Viewed' as this particular architectonics – a spatial navigation – the motion of moving pictures is revealed as an embodiment of space that approaches the feeling of the haptic" (180). Implied by this reading is the fact that a focus on Renaissance structures of perspective as the guiding force behind cinematic developments has obscured the true haptic nature of the cinema. The term "embodiment" is crucial here, and crops up again in Bruno's summarising statement that "The haptic measure that is the outcome of the spatiovisual embodiment of travel culture came into being with the very origins of modernity" (191). The role of the body, its ability to physically touch/be touched as well as to be emotionally affected (by a touching spatial experience), and its ability to apprehend movement through a kinaesthetic sense, will be seen to be crucial in the modernist narratives of Woolf and Richardson. Bruno clarifies the contribution of embodiment when comparing the cinema to the picturesque garden. In both of these contexts, "The movement of a subject creates a sense of place as a series of unfolding relationships. [. . .] An intersubjective corporeal mapping, it is nomadically



situated" (195-6). A nomadically situated picturesque space, a narrative sequence of emplacements, is the conceptual structure that orders Miriam's experiences in Richardson's Pilgrimage. The title of course refers to a particular kind of travel, that of pilgrimage, a form of purposed voyage that combines the shifting or nomadic place of the wandering pilgrim with the sense of other places, in different plains or registers – home or origin, destination, and the sacred figure to whom such travel is dedicated. The picturesque gardens to which Bruno refers are part of her history of the desire for pleasurable or entertaining spatial experience, symptomatic of modernity, which she refers to broadly as "Protocinematic activity" (188). This activity, she claims, constitutes a "narrativization of space," with a series of views ordered into a sequence (188). The possibility of a spatialised narrative as identified by Frank was thus inherent in an extended protocinematic history of the narrativisation of space. By the time of Frank's writing, haptic cinema had already, then, offered a model of spatial representation to the authors of experimental modernist texts.

Eventually, Bruno notes the history of the haptic term in an art historical context, and acknowledges a debt to Riegl. She also points out that Riegl's formulation of the haptic and exploration of this form of spatial apprehension in Egyptian art occurred "alongside" the emergence of the cinema. Lant's essay discussed above goes further, finding an Egyptomania in early film that played not only with the striking visual symbolism of Egyptian art, but also its unusual spatiality. In this way, developments in art theory and the cinema keep pace, and the haptic is conceptually formulated in relation to art rather than physiology at the same moment that its most significant manifestation, the cinema, is coming into being. In a crucial passage, Bruno notes that this haptic aspect of early cinema involves a participatory element, "for the haptic involves a sense of reciprocity. The haptic, as its etymological root suggests, allows us to come into contact with people and the surface of things" (254). To touch, then, is to be touched. Bruno goes on to note that "This reciprocal condition can be extended to a representational object as well; indeed, it invests the very process of film reception, for we are moved by the moving image" (254). Again, an emotional response and a kinaesthetic sense are invoked. When studying modernist texts that make use of the haptic we are, then, not only going in search of texts that are spatialised in their concrete form, that formally play with a spatialisation of narrative, but texts that offer the reader a reciprocal spatial experience. This crucial Bruno quotation continues, contending that "as a receptive function of skin, touch [. . .] covers the entire body [. . .]. Conceived as such a pervasive enterprise, the haptic sense actually can be understood as a geographic sense in a global way: it 'measures,' 'interfaces,' and 'borders' our relation to

the world, and does so habitually” (254). In this way, cinema can be seen as “implementing a geography of passage” (Bruno, *Atlas* 254). As that final phrase demonstrates, the terminology of travel, as well as having much in common with the technical language of film, also sets up semantic resonances within literature. Passages on foot in Woolf and Richardson will be seen to result in textual passages. Walking and writing are of course brought together in the term “passage” in Benjamin’s famously fragmented text of *flânerie*, the *Passagenwerk*, published in English as *The Arcades Project*. Literature of the haptic kind is also a *passagenwerk*, not necessarily of the Parisian arcades, but of human passage through urban and emotional space. It is worth quoting Bruno one final time, in her claim that “Motion pictures – the realm of (e)motion – wed the voyage of the analytical imagination to the pursuit of sensual pleasures. The diverse geographic directions of early modernity merged in film’s haptic way of picturing and experiencing space” (173). In what follows, the transition of the haptic in to the literary sphere will be observed in the work of Woolf and Richardson, looking at physical and imaginative spaces, their representation in spatialised narratives, and their experiential impact upon the reader who at once touches and is touched by the action of reading in the modernist period (in an emotional sense brought about by the foregrounding of the physical), in a way that will be seen to parallel the cinemagoer’s (e)motional experience as outlined at length by Bruno.

### **Dorothy Richardson’s Filmic Spaces**

The seminal modernist film journal *Close Up* was founded, along with its parent organisation Pool Publishing, in Territet, Switzerland in 1927. The founding editors were photographer, novelist and fledgling filmmaker Kenneth Macpherson, novelist and critic Bryher and experimental poet Hilda Doolittle (H.D.). It ran successfully for six and a half years, from July 1927 to December 1933, with an impressive team of contributing writers that included all of the editorial team, many popular and influential contemporary critics, and the prominent and formally inventive director Sergei Eisenstein. A regular feature of *Close Up* was a column entitled “Continuous Performance,” written by Dorothy Richardson. Susan Gevirtz has described this column as “a kind of meta-narrative about the narrativity of film” (Gevirtz 48), and yet the scope of the column was considerably broader than even this challenging remit allows. Richardson debated the cinemagoer’s experience, the civilising influence of the contemporary film, its relation to the mass market “movie,” its potential to offer a spiritual transformation, and its problematic transition from silent film, to sound film, to “talkie.” As Gevirtz indicates, the relationship between literature and film is also

considered, and the focus on the narrativity of film also implies its opposite, the filmic spatialisation of narrative. Throughout, Richardson's own participation as an audience member provides an anecdotal central strand to the "Continuous Performance" column, and she speaks with great hope for the future impact of the still nascent medium of film. Such an attitude is reflected in the journal as a whole, and outlined in the introductory comments made by Macpherson in the very first edition. An assessment of the present state of cinema around the globe, Macpherson's article is entitled "As Is," and announces that "now, after somewhat magnificent growth, one feels here is its [film's] critical age" (Macpherson 36). In fact, cinema has surpassed the current possibilities of all other arts, and Macpherson claims that "of all mediums here was one with fewest limitations" (36). The journal, in this context, seeks to take the temperature of the cinematic art in all of the countries where the determination to develop the form is strongest, since "the time has come to know what it is all about and where it is leading and what one is to expect. Perplexities, debates, arguments" (Macpherson 37). This manifesto for the journal is reflected on the cover of its initial editions, with volume three number four reading: "The only magazine devoted to films as an art [. . .] theory and analysis [. . .] no gossip" (Friedberg 8).

As Macpherson saw it, the Close Up team had their work cut out, since England was lagging behind the rest of the world as much in quality journal production as in truly revolutionary film making. "England cannot even turn out a peppy magazine," he claims, and instead the public is treated to "that hugely sterile flimflam decorously and expensively printed on best quality art paper, and an attitude of really awful indecent arrogance, especially toward anything new or progressive or intelligent" (37). Richardson's columns made a significant contribution to Close Up's project of an intelligent debate about the state of cinema, and its relation to art, commerce and the literary. Macpherson ends his editorial comments with an attempt to define the peculiar national quality of English cinema, in relation to the distinctive film making of Germany, France and (with some equivocation) Russia: "The point is HAS England a quality? I am rather afraid the English thing is barren, mind and super-mind and the dimensions (the only things which make for greatness) being so taboo" (38). Within this statement lies a hint as to the potential exploratory force of early film, and some key concerns that also translate to a reading of modernist literary texts: the structure of the mind, internal spaces of consciousness, and "dimensions," in terms of geometrical space and, possibly, the spiritual. Writing on Richardson's "Continuous Performance" columns, Laura Marcus observes that "She explored the conditions of cinema spectatorship in ways both practical [. . .] and phenomenological (how is the spectator

incorporated into the filmic spectacle?)” (Marcus, Introduction 150). Practical concerns included where cinemas should most appropriately be situated (in “The Cinema in Arcady”), and how to silence chatterers (in the bizarrely titled “(*Animal Impudens...*) (Early father, conditioned reflex of,)”). The less practical and more philosophical concerns mentioned in Marcus’s observation are another hint as to where cinema and the literary text might find common concerns, and highlight the possibility of Richardson’s thoughts on cinema crossing over into her non-cinema writing, including Pilgrimage. Such concerns include the phenomenology of the cinemagoer’s experience, the relationship between spectator and spectacle, and the question of incorporation – questions raised repeatedly by Bruno in her attempts to analyse the haptic nature of film.

Marcus cites Bryher’s book The Heart to Artemis: A Writer’s Memoirs, in which Bryher offers a typically gushing account of her encounter with Pilgrimage and its central protagonist, Miriam Henderson:

Then there was the excitement of her style, it was the first time that I realised that modern prose could be as exciting as poetry and as for continuous association, it was stereoscopic, a precursor of the cinema, moving from the window to a face, from a thought back to the room, all in one moment just as it happened in life. Dorothy Dille [a schoolfriend] was just as enthusiastic as I was [ . . . ] and both of us knew the sudden exhilaration in spite of the pressure upon us, as we rode down a London street, like Miriam, on top of a bus. [ . . . ] I did not meet Dorothy Richardson until 1923 but she was the Baedeker of all our early experiences (qtd. in Marcus, Introduction 152-3).

Bryher identifies Richardson’s style as “stereoscopic,” and therefore protocinematic, making use of a structure of “continuous association,” a description that echoes the title of Richardson’s Close Up columns. The movement of the writer’s attention from window to face suggests cinematic stylistic possibilities of montage. Bryher goes on to link her own urban experience, facilitated by the mechanised transport of a bus, with that of Miriam in Pilgrimage, and it should be noted that Elizabeth Dalloway’s bus-top journey in Woolf’s Mrs. Dalloway offers a further parallel (Dalloway 148). Travel is also implied with the mention of a Baedeker guide, and Bryher suggests that Richardson has offered a travel narrative that guides her and her school friend in their experiences as young women in the city. Overall, an urban context, travel through that context, and a cinematic textual representation of such a journey is outlined by Bryher. This indicates that beyond the confines of her writing explicitly dealing with cinema, Richardson was undertaking a project of cinematic writing.

Miriam declares her own fascination with protocinematic devices akin to the stereoscope when staying with the Brooms in the novel *Interim*: “Do you *remember* looking at the kaleidoscope? I used to cry about it sometimes at night; thinking of the patterns I had not seen. [. . .] Oh, and do you remember those things – did you have a little paper *theatre*?” [. . .] She rushed on to the stereoscope” (Richardson 2: 298-9). Carol Watts has observed that “Miriam’s perspective is shaped by the visual technologies of her moment: the lantern slide and almost eponymous Mirioramas of *Honeycomb*; the photographic method of Daguerre in *The Tunnel*” (Watts 60). Marcus notes that a cinematic language is used by Richardson in exploring Miriam’s consciousness, most explicitly in *Dawn’s Left Hand*, the novel so favourably reviewed by Bryher in the pages of *Close Up*. Upon her return to London from Oberland, Miriam contemplates her geographical transposition: “The memories accumulated since she landed were like a transparent film through which clearly she saw all she had left behind; and felt the spirit of it waiting within her to project itself upon things just ahead, things waiting in this room as she came up the stairs” (Richardson 4: 141). This mode of thinking about the relationship between past, present and future ties in with the crucial philosophy of the moment, which will be further discussed below. Marcus’ point is that the language of the cinema, “screen” and “project,” creeps in to *Pilgrimage*, just as the form of the cinema and its precursors can be seen to influence the very structure of the novel series as a whole.

In a “Continuous Performance” column entitled “Captions,” Richardson writes that “Art and literature, Siamese twins making their first curtsy to the public in a script that was a series of pictures, have never yet been separated. In its uttermost abstraction art is still a word about life and literature never ceases to be pictorial” (“Captions” 165). This phrase draws together and blends the two art forms, and undermines the formal categorisations that Lessing established in his “Laokoon.” Here Richardson makes a claim for the contravention of the formal boundaries between art and literature a full eighteen years before Frank published his own claims in “Spatial Form in Modern Literature.” Richardson’s radical approach to narrative takes her cinematic experiences as a catalyst, and renders the *Pilgrimage* sequence a key example of a modernist avant-garde text making use of the haptic. The “Continuous Performance” columns are impressive in the acuteness of their observations about the cinema as an art form, entertainment and social phenomenon. In “The Cinema in Arcady,” Richardson debates the merits of the presence of a cinema in a quiet coastal retreat. She suggests that “these lively, life-educated people of the coast villages and fishing stations do not need, as do the relatively isolated people of crowded



towns, the socialising influence of the cinema" ("Arcady" 184). The contemporary city creates loneliness in the crowd, from which the cinema provides solace, and such solace is unnecessary in a rural context. The city, then, is not only depicted within the cinema, but needs the cinema as a form of social bonding. Richardson moves on from this understanding of urban life to note the radical spatial relationships set up by the cinema. It suggests, of course, the simultaneity of two spaces: that of the cinema itself, and that depicted on the screen, and as such provides educative accounts of geographically distant locations. While the rural context may not have the same need for the assuagement of loneliness that Richardson ascribes to the city, she still observes that "It is not possible perfectly to disentangle from that of the wireless, the popular newspaper and the gramophone, the influence of the cinema in rural districts" ("Arcady" 185). Here she allies cinema with other technological agents of the triumph over spatial distance. So successful is cinema's contribution to the artificial reduction of this distance that "these [rural] people, and particularly the younger generation, have no longer quite the local character they had even a year ago" (186). "These youths and maidens," Richardson continues, "in becoming world citizens, in getting into communications with the unknown, become also recruits available [. . .] for the world-wide conversations now increasingly upon us" (186). Aside from a reference to the civilising force of the cinema for bringing global citizens into communication, this column also makes the broader claim that cinema transcends geographical space.

In her sixth column for Close Up, entitled "The Increasing Congregation," Richardson uses the metaphor of religious devotion and church-based worship to describe the way in which the individual sites of cinemas link as nodes in a global network:

And so here we all are. All over London, all over England, all over the world. Together in this strange hospice risen overnight, rough and provisional but guerdon none the less of a world in the making. Never before was such all-embracing hospitality save in an ever-open church [. . .]. School, salon, brothel, bethel, newspaper, art science, religion, philosophy, commerce, sport, adventure; flashes of beauty of all sorts. The only anything and everything. And here we all are, as never before. What will it do with us? ("Congregation" 171).

This vision of the cinema explains the diagnosed loss of the local in rural audience members, since to attend the cinema is to attend a part of an institution with a global reach. Richardson, in the latter quotation, offers a list of modes of operation for the cinema, and reiterates her sense of its civilising power in her reference to school, newspaper, philosophy, sport and adventure. In accordance with the outlook of Close Up she also sees cinema as an art, but adds "science" perhaps in order to underscore the technological means that facilitate

its operation in all these other manners. However, it is the mention of “bethel” and “religion” that is crucial here, in conjunction with the use of “congregation” in the column’s title: the cinema is a church, and as such not only a nodal site in geographical terms, but also a site of religious ecstasy, where that term is taken to mean both “to put out of place,” and “The state of being ‘beside oneself’” (OED). This structure of simultaneous emplacement is key to an understanding of the cinema as church, and is also a significant feature of the way in which space, in its many forms, is deployed in *Pilgrimage*. Miriam, in *Interim*, thinks of geographical space and its traversal in a way that reflects upon the spatial peculiarities of the cinema:

*Cosmopolis*, she scribbled in her note-book. The world of science and art is the true cosmopolis. Those were not the words in *Cosmopolis* but it was the idea. [. . .] Tearing off the page, she laid it on the sofa-head and sat contemplating an imagined map of Europe, with London, Paris and Berlin joined by a triangle [. . .]. All over the globe, dotted here and there, were people who read and thought, making a network of unanimous culture (Richardson 2: 342).

While the notion of a “unanimous culture” has sinister undertones that Miriam goes on to address when she thinks of the assimilation of all languages into English (Richardson 2: 342-3), this scene may usefully be read as an oblique description of the operation of the cinema which, as Richardson’s foregoing list in her column has described, is both science and art, and is also cosmopolis, linking the cities of the world in one global capital city. It can be no coincidence that the three cities named by Miriam as she contemplates cosmopolis were all of significance in the development of early film.

Richardson’s first “Continuous Performance” column is one place in which the particular spatial operations of the cinema can be seen to be related to the haptic in a way that may help to explain the transition of her cinematic ideas from the film-writing of her *Close Up* columns, to her literary work in *Pilgrimage*. Richardson recounts a return to the theatre after many years of film attendance, and notes in the former art “some essential failure to compel the co-operation of the creative consciousness of the audience” (“Continuous” 161). This implies that the cinema does claim such a power to captivate, and this is confirmed when Richardson goes on to claim that “Such co-operation cannot take place unless the audience is first stilled to forgetfulness of itself as an audience” (161). This forgetfulness of audience status is essential if that audience is to achieve “the plunge in to life that just any film can give” (161). The “co-operation of the creative consciousness of the audience” (my emphasis) is an aim that recalls Bruno’s description of the reciprocity of haptic cinema, and facilitates a “plunge in to life” that is an (e)motional journey, a touching

experience enabled by moving pictures. Describing the audience experience in a column published just three months later under the title “The Front Rows,” Richardson explains that a position in the front row of a cinema audience presents particular problems:

There was indeed no possibility of focusing a scene so immense that one could only move about in it from point to point and realise that the business of the expert front-rower is to find the centre of action and follow it as best he can. Of the whole as something to hold in the eye he can have no more idea than has the proverbial fly on the statue over which he crawls (“Front Rows” 172).

This description may be compared with Riegl’s categorisation of the nearsightedness of the haptic appreciation of Egyptian art (Lant 68), and the sense of touch is referred to in the phrase “something to hold in the eye,” as well as in the image of the crawling fly.

“The Front Rows” also states that the “creative power” of the cinema is “incalculable” (161), a power that Richardson aimed to harness in her literary work, by making much of the Siamese twin relationship between the literary and spatial arts. In “A Thousand Pities,” Richardson refers to “the thoughtlike swiftness of movement made possible by the film” (167), and a relationship can be traced between this swift (e)motion of the camera in a cinematic context, and the cinematically inflected stream of consciousness approach which she deploys to depict thought in *Pilgrimage*. Those writers who first and most famously experimented with stream of consciousness narrative are those who are also said to be cinematic in their style – “thoughtlike swiftness” perhaps explains this coincidence of observations. In discussing John Dos Passos’ *Manhattan Transfer* in her column “Almost Persuaded,” Richardson suggests that in his use of language a “barrier” was “splintered,” a “barrier against which modern art has flung itself in vain” (“Almost” 191). This barrier has been “fist-punched” by “all those novelists [. . .] who in pursuit of their particular aims, produced texts retrospectively labelled cinematographic” (191). In her use of the term cinematographic, and her suggestion that it is a critical term already in use, Richardson pre-empts Spiegel’s 1973 account of the reification of the cinematographic literary form and, indeed, Frank’s use of the same terminology. Richardson knows that a productive formal confluence is occurring between literature and cinema, one that is breaking down the barrier between the art forms – and she knows this because she is engaged in the process of enacting such a confluence in her own literary output. Such formal innovation occurs, perhaps, in response to “A new mental climate” in which is apprehended: “Uncertainty, noise, speed, movement, rapidity of external change that has taught them [the younger generation] to realise that to-morrow will not be the same as to-day” (“Spoon-Fed” 204). “And more than any other single factors [sic],” continues Richardson, “has the Cinema

contributed to the change in the mental climate wherein Everyman has his being" (204). Here Richardson sets up a difficulty of causal relationship: does the cinema offer formal innovation in order to reflect the changing nature of the contemporary urban experience, or is such experience, the being of the Everyman, altered by the presence and availability of the cinema as a model of seeing? It must be concluded that both relationships obtain.

Macpherson's claim that "mind and super-mind and the dimensions" are the "only things which make for greatness" suggests that it is the exploration of the spaces of human consciousness that is the proper endeavour of great cinema. Through the use of the cinematographic stream of consciousness, such an exploration becomes possible, also, for the literary text. In a crucial "Continuous Performance" column entitled "The Film Gone Male," written in 1932 when the writing of Pilgrimage was well under way, Richardson states that:

Memory, psychology is to-day declaring, is passive consciousness. Those who accept this dictum see the in-rolling future as living reality and the past as reality entombed. [. . .]. For these straight-line thinkers memory is a mere glance over the shoulder along a past seen as a progression from the near end of which mankind goes forward. [. . .] But there is memory and memory. And memory proper, as distinct from a mere backward glance [. . .] gathers, can gather, and pile up its wealth only round universal, unchanging, unevolving verities that move neither backwards nor forwards and have neither speech nor language ("Male" 205-6).

For Richardson, memory itself is the great spatialiser, in that it disrupts the linear narrative flow of consciousness in order to pile up its riches, layering past events upon the moment. With this appreciation of memory comes a demand for a flexibly spatialised form of narrative, and the cinema seems to offer an appropriate model. It is memory that is responsible for some of the Pilgrimage sequence's most radical textual depictions of space, since Miriam's consciousness recalls past experiences which are always tied to the concrete spaces in which they occurred. In this way, past experiences of concrete or tangible spaces are "pile[d] up" around her current space of dwelling through recollection. Thus the concrete spaces of urban experience, the emotional space of Miriam's consciousness, and the recollected spaces of past experience interweave in a narrative that is radically spatial rather than sequential, despite its overall *kunstlerroman* journey towards the moment when Miriam truly commences writing. In an article entitled "In a Moment: Film and the Philosophy of Modernity," Leo Charney has suggested that the understanding of existence as a progression through a series of moments was a vital way in which philosophers sought to understand the nature of existence in the modernist period. It is this debate with which Richardson, in the

above quotation, seeks to engage. Charney claims that “The category of the moment as the discrete marker of sensual response was first put forward by the aesthete Walter Pater in [ . . . ] *Studies in the History of the Renaissance* in 1873” (Charney 280), and that this category survived as a subject of study in the work of Benjamin, Heidegger and Jean Epstein among others. The philosophy of moment involved an appreciation of the fact that man was experiencing the constant loss of the moment as the next moment came into existence. The present moment could only be recognised pre-rationally, and fully grasped only retrospectively.

This constant loss of the present seems to tie in to the Simmelian description of the pace of modern life, in which sensations rapidly pass through human awareness in a bewildering fashion. Charney claims that the only way to truly grasp a moment was, for his philosophers, to rely on physical responses: “The moment exists to the extent that the individual experiences immediate, tangible sensation” (279). Such an understanding of the moment suggests that existence does operate in the context of the “in-rolling future” to which Richardson refers, and the only guard against the continuous disorientating loss of the present is to rely on tangibility, the physical (and, as the term secondarily implies, emotional) sensations of the moment. If Miriam’s piling up of moments through processes of recollection prevents the constant loss of the present, it is reasonable to suggest that physical sensations, tangibility, will play a role in the text of Pilgrimage. Epstein theorised the cinema as a moving experience, as a rapid passage through space and time. For Charney, “It was above all this form of moving experience which tied the experience of film to the experience of daily life in modernity” (292). Further, through a focus on sensations, “Past and future clashed not in a hypothetical zone but on the terrain of the body. This alienation [of contemporary existence] both grounded and arose out of the modern aspiration to seize fleeting moments of sensation as a hedge against their inexorable evisceration” (Charney 293). The in-rolling nature of the film viewing experience in this way echoes the sensual bombardment of life in modernity, and the only way to grasp the moment is to rely on pre-rational, physical experience. For Richardson, the experience of the moment resembles a piling up such as Miriam undertakes through her recollections, and the cinema offers a model for the representation of this experience that is not wholly explained by an in-rolling succession of moments. Richardson’s view of the relationship between the past and the human capacities of perception is confirmed in the unlikely environment of The Dental Record, for which she wrote whilst working as a dentists’ receptionist (as Miriam also does). She claims that “It is the characteristic vice of the intellect to see the past as a straight line



stretching out behind humanity like a sort of indefinite tail. In actual experience it is much more like an agglomeration, a vital process of crystallization grouped in and about the human consciousness, confirming and enriching individual experience" (qtd. in Thomson 57).

The connection that Richardson makes in Pilgrimage between the spaces of Miriam's consciousness and a cinematic style of representation can be linked to a broader trend in the modernist period of the exploration of heretofore opaque spaces. As Bruno has it, "We now see the moving image emerging out of that particular invention of modernity that is the geography of the interior" (203). While Bruno refers to the exploration of consciousness, journeys into other regions of unexplored territory are also relevant, such as the invention of the x-ray and the discovery of the structure of an atom. For Bruno, "The expansion of vision toward the interior opened possibilities for new forms of haptic travel: journeys into emotional space" (203). It is worth noting in this context that the term "stream of consciousness," only subsequently adopted as a literary stylistic designation, originally belonged to this trend for the exploration of the interior, being attributed to William James and his 1890 work Principles of Psychology. Richardson began writing Pilgrimage in 1912, when the trend for interior exploration was still very much in evidence. Her own "Foreword" to the first collected edition of the novel sequence, published in 1938, explicitly addresses this issue. During the writing of the twelve novels collected in this edition,<sup>8</sup> she records: "Phrases began to appear, formulae devised to meet the exigencies of literary criticism. 'The Stream of Consciousness' lyrically led the way, to be gladly welcomed by all who could persuade themselves of the possibility of comparing consciousness to a stream" (Richardson 1: 11). Again she questions the suggestion of linear flow as an adequate model for consciousness, whatever contemporary psychology may say. In this "Foreword" Richardson describes the experience of writing the early novels of the sequence, with the author: "Aware, as she wrote [. . .] of the substitution [. . .] of a stranger in the form of contemplated reality having for the first time in her experience its own say" (10). This foregrounding of experience over representation recalls, again, the Proustian thesis of the importance of sensibility, as outlined by Frank. This connection is apparently confirmed by the mention of Proust later in the same piece: "News came from France of one Marcel Proust, said to be producing an unprecedentedly profound and opulent reconstruction of

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<sup>8</sup> The 1938 edition of Pilgrimage includes the twelve novels by then completed, whereas the 1967 edition, and all subsequent editions, include the thirteenth, unfinished novel March Moonlight, upon which Richardson was working until ill health ended her writing career, only three years before her death in 1957.

experience focused from within the mind of a single individual" (10). The importance of creating a text that facilitates an experience is further underlined by Richardson's claim that the first novel of the sequence, Pointed Roofs, was "written to the accompaniment of a sense of being upon a fresh pathway, an adventure so searching and, sometimes, so joyous as to produce a longing for participation" (10). This "participation" suggests a reciprocal engagement with the text on the part of the reader that recalls both the Proustian model, Richardson's claims that the audience must forget its status as audience when viewing a film, and Bruno's insistence on reciprocity in the experience of touch. Gevirtz neatly summarises this experience of the reader/spectator when she claims that "The advent of modernism, coinciding with that of film, can be marked by the shift from the belief that it is possible to report subjective states, to the belief that it is possible only to render them" (39). She describes the modernist film as, in fact, a "rendering machine" (39), and, for Richardson at least, modernist literature could, and should, be viewed in the same way.

Space is, then, crucial to Richardson's project in writing Pilgrimage. Writing her novel sequence at the same time as her own ideas about the connection between narrative and cinema were being worked through in her "Continuous Performance" columns, both forms of writing benefited from her theorisation of the Siamese twin relationship between these two key forms of expression. Pilgrimage is a novel that relies heavily on geographical transpositions as its central protagonist travels the world. It also makes much of the psychological impact of spaces, be they those of newly experienced countries, the concrete realities of the city environment, or the domestic spaces in which Miriam lives and works. Her recollections draw these concrete spaces of past experience into a simultaneous presence with the space in which she currently resides. Further, such recollected spaces offer a glimpse into the psychological space of Miriam's consciousness. A distinction should, then, be made between concrete or physical spaces, those which Elisabeth Bronfen has usefully described as "refer[ing] to a reality outside the text" (Bronfen 4), and the metaphorical space of Miriam's consciousness. The fact that the latter relies heavily on the recollected experience of past concrete spaces, and that Miriam invests concrete spaces with psychological resonances, makes a reading of the novel's spatial economy somewhat challenging. Constructing a simultaneous layering of spaces through processes of recollection, Miriam's consciousness helps Richardson to create a text that eschews linear narrative progression and places space, not time, in the foreground. The fact that Richardson found the "stream" model of consciousness unhelpful, and favoured a view of the piling up of impressions in a moment, is therefore crucial to an understanding of her project in

Pilgrimage. This simultaneity of a text that seeks to give an accurate experiential picture to the reader of the mind's processing of concrete space is perhaps at the root of Frank's description of Joyce's Ulysses in "Spatial Form in Modern Literature." Richardson's review of Joyce's subsequent project, Finnegans Wake, observes that:

Opening, just anywhere, its pages, the reader is immediately engrossed. Time and place, and the identity of characters, if any happen to appear, are relatively immaterial. [ . . . ] the reader does not find himself, as inevitably he would in plunging thus carelessly into the midst of the dramatic novel complete with plot, set scenes, beginning, middle, climax, and curtain, completely at sea. He finds himself within a medium whose close texture, like that of poetry, is everywhere significant. ("Adventure for Readers" 426).

Pilgrimage, although a very different book to Finnegans Wake in terms of both style and content, can be said to share its rejection of a linear narrative, and also to have a "close texture" which is "everywhere significant." As Bronfen has stated, Pilgrimage is the story of Miriam's journey towards the "scene of writing" (1), the concrete/physical and emotional/psychological space in which writing can happen. This journey largely unfolds in an urban context, and the city of London is of great importance in Miriam's emotional and literary development. That the book should be peculiarly concerned with space is therefore, perhaps, inevitable. In addition, the book in its entirety is an exercise in simultaneity, since it is a "portrait of the artist as a young woman" (Bronfen 1), and tells the story of the possibility of its own creation, the moment at which Miriam is able to sit down and write, and we know that she will write a book very similar to the one we have just finished reading. It is also a fictional narrative with relies heavily on autobiographical experience, and as such is the story of Richardson's own journey toward the possibility of writing it into existence. Pilgrimage is, in this sense, a continuous performance, its end propelling the reader back to its beginning. A distanced reflection on the process of writing the text is visible in the "Foreword," when Richardson explicitly tells the tale of the writing of the text that will follow.

Bronfen suggests that Pilgrimage's descriptions of concrete spatial locations "are brought into play as semantically encoded sites and localities which structure the entire text so as to display the enspacement of human existence" (1). Certain spaces within the novel sequence operate as nodes of meaning with a particular emotional resonance for Miriam as a character. London as a physical space of ongoing experience is a vital scene for the unfolding of her social, sexual and political development as well as the site of her literary productivity. The garden of her family home at Babington is at once a concrete space in which experience has unfolded, and a recollected space that, through memory, she often

drags into simultaneity with a chronologically subsequent spatial experience. The garden, as Bronfen has noted, is a space through which we gain access to Miriam's consciousness (Bronfen 13). These two spaces, the public urban space of London, and the private domestic space of the Babington garden, provide important examples of the negotiations with space, and with the haptic sense, that Richardson undertakes in Pilgrimage. Through the garden space it can be seen that recollection brings about a simultaneity of spaces, and Bronfen has pointed out that simultaneity was a dream of Richardson's. In an interview of 1929, when asked "What should you most like to do, to know, to be?" Richardson replied that she wished to know "How to be perfectly in two places at once" (qtd. in Bronfen 1). The aspiration toward simultaneity that Richardson mentions here, however light-heartedly, is enacted through Miriam in her relationship to the spaces of Pilgrimage. This focus upon space, and the complexities it brings to narrative structure, makes the untangling of the chronology of events within the novel sequence problematic. The most comprehensive attempt to offer a chronology has been George H. Thomson's, and while the result is a helpful tool of orientation within Pilgrimage, there are many queries remaining in terms of dates, and the order in which events occur, so disrupted by recollection is the narrative. The focus on space is evident not only in these queries of chronology, but in Thomson's frequent references to the primacy of spatial location. While this is inevitable in any attempt to summarise the action of a text, the task of achieving this for Pilgrimage frequently involves references to spaces which are foregrounded at the expense of any actual action. For example, Thomson's description of Saturday 5 April, which falls within The Tunnel, states simply: "Miriam savors her attic in Mrs. Bailey's rooming house, so much more friendly than the four previous places she had stayed since coming to London" (Thomson 64). With the problematic nature of the project in mind, Thomson's title "Pilgrimage: A Chronology" takes on a secondary meaning, as Pilgrimage's achronology is inevitable in a text so concerned with spatial experience.

The garden at Babington is first introduced as a space of Miriam's recollection when, as Bronfen points out, she receives a letter from the family at home while staying in Germany: "The little German garden was disappearing from Miriam's eyes. [. . .] why had she not stayed . . . just one more spring? . . . how silly and hurried she had been, and there at home in the garden lilac was quietly coming out" (Richardson 1: 112). The space of the German garden at which she is looking from her position in the *saal* retreats as she reads Harriett's letter, and the Babington garden is superimposed through the action of memory. The remembered garden, brought into Miriam's consciousness via the letter from Harriett,



becomes of greater significance than her present location, despite its temporal and geographical distance. As Bronfen explains, “In the course of memory work it [the actual material space] becomes ever more fictional [. . .]. At the same time, however, by virtue of this temporal distance and this transformation into an imagined place, the space of the past is felt to be increasingly *real*” (15-16). The Babington garden, as a site of memory, is one of the crucial figures through which Richardson creates a spatial simultaneity in her narrative, making use of a cinematographic approach to space that disrupts the linear or chronological flow of the story and, in so doing, offers an insight into the hidden territories of Miriam’s consciousness. The garden returns throughout the early part of the novel sequence, each time superimposing its remembered space upon the concrete space of Miriam’s present experience. Bruno’s reading of the protocinematic entertainment offered by the picturesque garden of the nineteenth century is relevant here. Of such relevance, in fact, that it begins to sound like a description of Miriam’s own use of her Babington garden memories:

A memory theater of sensual pleasures, the [picturesque] garden was an exterior that put the spectator in ‘touch’ with inner space. As one moved through the space of the garden, a constant double movement connected external to internal topographies. The garden was thus an outside turned into an inside; but it was also the projection of an inner world onto the outer geography. In a sensuous mobilization, the exterior of the landscape was transformed into an interior map – the landscape within us (Bruno, *Atlas* 203).

The picturesque garden, then, involves a dual, simultaneous exploration, in which external space and internal space unfold from moment to moment. That such gardens offered a sequence of ordered views, a form of spatial narrative, is the origin of Bruno’s claim that they may be considered a forerunner of the cinema as a source of entertainment. In attempting a spatialised and cinematic narrative in *Pilgrimage*, Richardson hits upon the garden as space of contemplation, simultaneity, and the exploration of internal topographies. For Bruno, this action of bringing internal and external topographies into contiguity is an action of touch, a haptic experience.

The public, hurried and noisy space of London, although crucial to Miriam’s development as an artist, is of a very different order to the contemplative space of her recollected garden. Bryher’s review of *Dawn’s Left Hand* observes that “in each page an aspect of London is created that like an image from a film, substitutes itself for memory, to revolve before the eyes as we read” (Bryher 210). Here Bryher makes reference to the thoughtlike swiftness of film, and suggests that, as in film, London appears to “revolve before the eyes,” i.e. to take on a visible three dimensionality as a result of the reading process. Miriam’s present space of experience is foregrounded here, as memory is jettisoned



in the interests of creating a visceral experience for the reader that occurs as Miriam's own experience occurs. Travel around London is central to the perception of its spatial reality, highlighted by the adjectival neologism in the description of North London as "noisy and trammy" (Richardson 1: 322). Miriam's walks around London are opportunities for both heedlessness as to her surroundings, and for reflections upon abstract emotions:

She wandered about between Wimpole Street and St Pancras, holding in imagination wordless converse with a stranger whose whole experience had melted and vanished like her own, into the flow of light down the streets; into the unending joy of the way the angles of buildings cut themselves out against the sky, glorious if she paused to survey them [. . .] a maze of shapes, flowing, tilting into each other, in endless patterns, sharp against the light; sharing her joy in the changing same song of the London traffic; the bliss of post offices and railway stations, cabs going on and on towards unknown space; omnibuses rumbling securely from point to point, always within the magic circle of London (Richardson 3: 85-6).

Her purposeless "wandering" finds a "joy" in the angles and juxtapositions of buildings which may remain only dimly registered, but, if contemplated, become "glorious." The "maze of shapes" and "tilting," "endless patterns" recall the kaleidoscope of her youth, whose potential for the endless generation of patterns brought her to tears. The "changing same song" of London indicates its flow of movement, the reliability of its pattern of ceaseless change. Post offices, railway stations and the "point to point" travel of omnibuses give London its sense of an ordered network of spaces, although the cabs head off into "unknown," unexplored, space. London, then, has a circular or, more properly, circulatory magic. Miriam's own circuitous or wandering perambulations bring out this kaleidoscopic magic. The mention of the kaleidoscope works to evoke the fragmented, angular shiftings of visual experience in the city, but also, of course, recalls attention to the cinematic, and thence haptic, aspect of Richardson's writing project. Travel and the cinematic mode of perception are linked in a later episode when Miriam takes a tram ride to the coast: "Through the sliding door she escaped into the welcome of reflected light, into an inner world that changed the aspect of everything about her. When the tram moved off, the scenes framed by the windows grew beautiful in movement. The framing and the movement created them, gave them a life that was not the life of wild nature only" (Richardson 4: 265). The framed scenes that, in motion, transform the natural world, bringing to it a new form of life through the mechanised means of its presentation to the eye, recall the cinema. An earlier bus journey within London itself is also set up as a cinematic experience, and again the kaleidoscope is mentioned: "In the dimly lit little interior, moving along through the backward flowing mist-screened street lights, she dropped away from the circling worlds of sound, and sat thoughtless, gazing inward along the bright kaleidoscopic vistas that came

unfailing and unchanged whenever she was moving, alone and still, against the moving tide of London” (Richardson 3: 114). The “dimly lit” interior, the reference to a screen and Miriam’s gazing, set up the cinematic relationship between spectacle and spectator. The “thoughtless”ness of the cinematic experience is debated by Richardson in her column “This Spoon-Fed Generation?” The “moving tide” of London provides a moving picture. That Miriam is described as “moving, alone and still” seems at first to be a paradoxical statement, although of course her position on an omnibus explains this phraseology: while she is physically still, her movement through the landscape is technologically, mechanically enabled. Such an apparently contradictory situation, of being at once still and moving, is one which Richardson explicitly claims to be cinematic when she states in her column “Narcissus” that: “In this single, simple factor rests the whole power of the film: [. . .] In life, we contemplate a landscape from one point, or walking through it, break it into bits. The film, by setting the landscape in motion and keeping us still, allows it to walk through us” (“Narcissus 203).

Within the context of the noisy, trammy city of London, the privacy and quiet of the domestic room is essential as a space in which Miriam can write. Yet, according to Bronfen, it also works at a “figurative level as a threshold between the conscious and unconscious, between the products of experience and those of the imagination” (82). While London as a city is a space of experience, of the groundwork of Miriam’s *kunstlerroman*, the private rooms she occupies within that city enable the exercising of her imagination, and are thus essential in the creation of her writing. Of her room in Mrs. Bailey’s boarding house, for example, she notes: “The room was full of clear strength. There must always be a clear cold room to return to. There was no other way of keeping the inward peace. Outside one need do nothing but what was expected of one, asking nothing for oneself but freedom to return, to the centre” (Richardson 2: 321). For the wider city of London, travel creates a haptic appreciation of space, and emotional response to the moving pictures provided by the action of walking or travel on motorised transport. For the domestic spaces in which Miriam finds refuge from the city, such travel is imaginative, endowing the spaces of her living with attributes beyond those of the physical realities of space. For both forms of space, the experience is moving – in terms of forms of travel, and in emotional terms. The cinematic aspect to bus or tram travel in the city foregrounds the moving picture, and yet even domestic space is occasionally described in such a way that it comes to sound cinematic. Miriam’s room in *Deadlock* provides four walls that, even as they shelter her, also operate as screens onto which imagined, mobile spaces can be projected: “The walls were traveller’s

walls. That had been their first fascination [. . .] now [. . .]. They saw her years of travel contract to a few easily afforded moments, lit, though she had not known it, by light instreaming from the past and flowing now visibly ahead across the farther years” (Richardson 3: 87). This domestic moving picture display is, it turns out, the only travel experience that counts, since Miriam later says to Hypo that “Of course there is actually no such thing as travel. So they say. There is nothing but a *Voyage autour de ma Chambre*, meaning *de tout ce que je suis*, even in a *tour du monde*” (Richardson 4: 167).

The spatial inventiveness of Richardson’s narrative transforms the chronology of Miriam’s *kunstlerroman* into an achronological, spatialised, cinematic text. Miriam’s Babington garden drags the recollection of concrete space into simultaneity with the present experience of space as outlined in the forward flow of the text, and echoes the protocinematic spatial narrative of the picturesque garden. London’s spaces are experienced as cinematic spectacle through the mechanised mediation of tram and bus rides, as well as by Miriam’s perambulatory activities. The domestic spaces that Miriam inhabits within London are also, surprisingly, subject to travel and recollection, and are even viewed as a screen onto which a broader spatial scope is projected. How, then, might the haptic be seen to be at work in this cinematic narrative? It is clear that Miriam undertakes (e)motional journeys, creating moving pictures, both mobile and psychologically affecting, through her travels, both in London and beyond. It seems, however, that the spectatorship of the screens of actual or imagined travel is primarily visual for Miriam, touching *only* in an emotional sense. Maurice Blanchot has asked “What happens when what you see, even from a distance, seems to touch you with a grasping contact, when the matter of seeing is a sort of touch, when seeing is a *contact* at a distance?” (qtd. in Bruno 75). The haptic element of the cinematic is foregrounded not in Miriam’s experience of the spaces of her city, room, garden or consciousness, but in the experience of reading, one that truly enables *contact*. For within *Pilgrimage*, reading is figured as a tangible experience, both open to touch, and emotionally touching. When Miriam reads Ibsen’s *Brand* in the ABC restaurant, she remains engrossed in the text, even when those running the restaurant are keen for their remaining customers to leave: “The electric lights flashed out all over the A.B.C. at once. Miriam remained bent low over her book” (Richardson 2: 383). The captivating quality of the book is its ability to offer the reader an experience, a connection with their sensibility, rather than a mere representation: “You are *in* Norway when you read. That is why people read books by geniuses and look far-away when they talk about them” (Richardson 2: 383). For Miriam, as for the reader of *Pilgrimage*, the reading experience is not only cinematic but haptic,

generated by a physically and emotional touching text which constitutes not a narrative but a moving picture.

### **Virginia Woolf and the Experience of Urban Space**

Opening her 1926 essay "The Cinema," Virginia Woolf writes: "People say that the savage no longer exists in us, that we are at the fag-end of civilization, that everything has been said already, and that it is too late to be ambitious. But these philosophers have presumably forgotten the movies. They have never seen the savages of the twentieth-century watching the pictures" ("Cinema" 166). This chapter began by observing the ambivalence with which Woolf approaches the cinema, and such ambivalence is certainly in evidence within the above quotation. There is a savagery in the movies despite the contemporary era's view of itself as the high point of civilisation (although the term "fag-end" speaks, of course, of decadence). Yet there is also scope for ambition within this new form of artistic expression, and in this Woolf seems to agree, at least in part, with the sentiments that were to form the philosophy of Close Up, launched the following year. Woolf's use of the term "movies," and the ambiguous "pictures," suggests that she is talking about the mass appeal commercial efforts of Hollywood, rather than the overtly art-oriented work upon which Close Up came to focus. Woolf's class prejudice and fear of the masses is thus creeping in to further complicate her attitude to the cinema.

Describing the experience of movie-going, Woolf writes: "All is hubble-bubble, swarm and chaos. We are peering over the edge of a cauldron in which fragments of all shape and savours seem to simmer; now and again some vast form heaves itself up and seems about to haul itself out of chaos" (166). The passage appears to rely upon the witches of Macbeth for its central conceit of unexplained, and potentially malevolent, magic. Since elsewhere in her oeuvre (A Room of One's Own and Night and Day in particular) Shakespeare represents stultifying literary tradition, it is appropriate that he should here be used to give the reader a sense of foreboding about a new, revolutionary art form – foreboding, after all, is the stock in trade of the witches. This "hubble-bubble" passage also recalls Miriam's experience of walking near St. Pancras, and again we see that the cinema is an art of sensory bombardment and, therefore, a peculiarly urban art. Such excessive sensory stimulation may, claims Woolf, numb the mind: "The eye licks it all up instantaneously, and the brain, agreeably titillated, settles down to watch things happening without bestirring itself to think" (166). This is the debate with which Richardson engages in the "This Spoon-

Fed Generation?" column: does the visual experience of the cinema preclude the action of thought, its thoughtlike swiftness preventing the work of the mind? Crucially, Woolf describes the eye as "licking," undertaking a kind of *contact* in which the retinal engagement with the screen becomes so strong that it effectively touches what it sees. The eye is epidermic here, a particular modification of the skin. However, Woolf does concede that the mind has work to do in the action of watching:

The eye is in difficulties. The eye wants help. The eye says to the brain, "[. . .] You are needed." Together they look at the king, the boat, the horse [on screen], and the brain sees at once that they have taken on a quality which does not belong to the simple photograph of real life. They have become not more beautiful in the sense in which pictures are beautiful, but shall we call it (our vocabulary is miserably insufficient) more real, or real with a different reality from that which we perceive in daily life? We behold them as they are when we are not there. We see life as it is when we have no part in it (167).

Thus the brain is persuaded into action when the eye sees the ordinary translated into the beautiful through the intervention of the filmic mechanism. The suggestion that movies offer a "more real" world beyond the screen, or a "different reality," is an idea that, at its furthest extension, moves towards the possibility of being able to transgress the boundary of the screen itself and participate in that reality. This is perhaps the endpoint of the haptic, and Woolf does not go so far. This hint at the haptic sense is prompted by a linguistic problem, since the contemporary vocabulary is "miserably insufficient" for the encapsulation of this radical new experience. In this claim Woolf echoes her own statement in "Modern Fiction" (written 1919) about the "ill-fitting vestments" of the language of contemporary fiction, and its inability to capture life as it is ("Modern" 105). Vocabulary therefore fails in relation to both of Richardson's Siamese twins: the cinema and fiction. Woolf herself claims that this alliance between the two art forms is unnatural: "The cinema fell upon its prey with immense rapacity, and to the moment largely subsists upon the body of its unfortunate victim. But the results are disastrous to both" ("Cinema" 168). Yet the relationship between the two is, as Woolf observes, structured in terms of a one-way flow; novels provide plots and scenarios which the cinema then attempts to depict. Woolf had by the time of writing "The Cinema" found considerable power in the reverse relationship. However unconsciously, by allowing her books to fall upon the mechanisms of the cinema she generated innovative and affecting texts.

Critics have been divided in their assessments of the importance of the visual and tactile senses in Woolf's oeuvre. Some have seen her fascination with the visual as precluding an engagement with touch on anything other than a metaphorical level (Richter 68-9; Edson



119-124). Others have suggested that physical engagement forms a crucial part of Woolf's work, despite her visual or aesthetic explorations (Fulker 3-25), and that the sense of touch is in fact a preoccupation for the author (Curtin 15-40). By exploring the connection between cinema and the haptic, and bringing that connection to bear on Woolf's work, it becomes possible to see that the visual versus tactile debate is not so clearly divided. Woolf's interest in the cinema and its potential in no way curbed her investigations into the tactile, either at the level of content when she has her characters engage with each other and the city through the medium or metaphor of touch, or at the level of her own literary form.

In the above description of the cinema, the viewer is privileged to view the king/boat/horse of the movies "as they are when we are not there." This ability to allow the spectator to view the scene unmediated by a narrating consciousness and from an unspecified perspective attributable only to the apparatus of the film's production is one of the true innovations that Woolf highlights in her consideration of the movies. Yet contemporary film is not capitalising on such possibilities, content as it is to focus upon surface concerns. Such a focus is the source of the unproductive relationship between literature and film, since the novel offers access to the mind of its characters, while the film can find no adequate correlate through which to represent this material. Film, it seems, lacks a visual vocabulary that would enable the effective transition of a novel to the screen. Woolf uses Tolstoy's Anna Karenina as an example, claiming that: "the brain knows Anna almost entirely by the inside of her mind – her charm, her passion, her despair. All the emphasis is laid by the cinema upon her teeth, her pearls, and her velvet" ("Cinema" 168). Recalling the unnecessary focus upon Mrs. Brown's buttons that mars realist fiction ("Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown" 1924), we know that such a focus on surface detail, the matter of the visual, is anathema to Woolf's own views as to the potential of literature. That the movies should rob novels of their potential to truly engage the reader and to offer an insight into the mental states of their characters is certainly a mark against them. However, when this relationship between the Siamese twins is reversed, the cinema's contribution to the novel can reinstate and expand just these kinds of possibility. The cinematic stream of consciousness style in fact enables the exploration of the internal topographies of the mind to be explored in a literary context. The potential of the twin media is obliquely illustrated by a short episode from Jacob's Room:

The motor omnibuses were locked. [. . .] The proximity of the omnibuses gave the outside passengers an opportunity to stare into each other's faces. Yet few took advantage of it. Each had his own business to think of. Each had his past shut in him like the leaves of a book known to him by heart [. . .] and the

passengers going the opposite way could read nothing at all save 'a man with a red moustache,' 'a young man in grey smoking a pipe' (Jacob's 68-9).

Past and personality are confined within the mind, book-like. By contrast, the screen-like frame of the omnibus window allows the perception only of surface details, the pipe and moustache being of the same trivial order as Anna Karenina's teeth or pearls. Again, Woolf associates internal topographies with the particular reach of literature, and surface shimmer with the movies.

The section of "The Cinema" most commonly cited within critical literature is Woolf's recollection of a showing of The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari (Robert Weine, 1919), during which a tadpole-like shadow appears on the screen: "For a moment it seemed to embody some monstrous diseased imagination of the lunatic's brain. For a moment it seemed as if thought could be conveyed by shape more effectively than by words. The monstrous quivering tadpole seemed to be fear itself, and not the statement 'I am afraid'. In fact, the shadow was accidental and the effect unintentional" (169). Weine's use of shadow throughout the film, including false shadows painted on to the expressionist scenery, makes Woolf's presumption a logical one. For this brief moment her beliefs about the comparative capabilities of film and literature are reversed, as the former appears to offer a visual correlate to the sensation of fear that in fact embodies fear, rendering rather than representing that emotion. Words, by comparison, are able only to reflect on that emotion at one remove. Yet this radical use of cinema is glimpsed through an accident – a fault of either film or projector, rather than a calculated experiment on the part of Weine. This section works as a proto-manifesto for a cinema of abstraction, such is Woolf's belief, albeit temporary, in the affective power of film. She expands upon the possibilities that the tadpole suggests when she writes:

Is there, we ask, some secret language which we feel and see, but never speak, and, if so, could this be made visible to the eye? Is there any characteristic which thought possesses that can be rendered visible without the help of words? [. . .] it has [. . .] especially in moments of emotion, the picture-making power, the need to lift its burden to another bearer; to let an image run side by side along with it. The likeness of the thought is for some reason more beautiful, more comprehensible, more available, than the thought itself (169).

Woolf makes the connection here between seeing and feeling, the emotional response to an art form that places these in alliance, and the ability of a "picture-making power" to "lift its burden" to the viewer, to place it within reach. Further, she claims that "if so much of our thinking and feeling is connected with seeing, some residue of visual emotion which is of no

use either to painter or poet may still await the cinema" (170). The potential of this envisaged future cinema is, then, to provide direct access to emotion, to put the audience in touch with that which it depicts; to become, in effect, a rendering machine.

The cinema's thoughtlike swiftness will play a role in enabling this touching experience, since "The most fantastic contrasts could be flashed before us with a speed which the writer can only toil after in vain" (Woolf, "The Cinema" 170). Through the speed that is peculiar to the medium of film, "The past could be unrolled, distances annihilated" (171), in a way that begins to sound like the model of the "in-rolling" future that Richardson felt was contrary to her own view of the nature of experience. For now, Woolf's discussion of the potential of the cinema is exploratory and theoretical: "How all this is to be attempted, much less achieved, no one at the moment can tell us. We get intimations only in the chaos of the streets, perhaps, when some momentary assembly of colour, sound, movement, suggests that here is a scene waiting a new art to be transfixed" ("The Cinema" 171). It is of vital importance to note that these intimations of the future power of the cinema stem from the fortuitous conjunctions offered by the urban street. Not only does this confirm that the cinema is a truly urban art, but it suggests that the city has a generative potential of its own where stylistic innovation is concerned; that it calls for cinematic treatment will be seen to be relevant to *both* cinema and literature. While the cinema presently kills literature in its heavy-handed adaptations that can only reveal Anna Karenina's pearls but not her mind, a future cinema using abstract visual correlates could have enormous scope and power. Woolf does not explicitly address the possibility held within the Siamese twin relationship if the flow of influence is reversed: the fact that literature might use cinematic methods in terms of style and hapticity, and reach the reader by rendering emotional states through the creation of literary (e)motional pictures. Yet despite her ambivalence towards the movies, and her failure to address the use of the cinematic in a literary context, Woolf's own literary output prior to the publication of "The Cinema" suggests that she has gone a considerable way toward fulfilling her own proto-manifesto for the cinema by adopting cinematic elements within her writing. Whether consciously or unconsciously, Woolf's pre-1926 work demonstrates a crucial and productive relationship with the cinema – one which goes curiously unacknowledged in her subsequent essay.

Maggie Humm has established that Woolf's engagement with photographic technology was a lengthy one, with her first written reference to photography found in an 1897 letter to her brother Thoby (Humm, *Virginia Woolf...* 4). "From the age of fifteen,"

claims Humm, “photographs framed Woolf’s world” (4). She grew up amongst “the first generation of women to be active photographers and cinema-goers from childhood” (8), or at least from her early teens. Importantly, this long-standing connection with photographic devices led Woolf to associate the registering of emotion with the technological practices associated with the developing of photographs. In a 1940 letter to the composer Ethel Smyth, Woolf discusses her own emotions via a parallel to the development process: “how then do I transfer these images to my sensitive paper brain? Because I have a heart. Yes, and it is the heart that makes the paper take, as they say” (qtd. in Humm, *Virginia Woolf...* 10). Thus a link is established between photography and the private emotional register; one which seems to be hinted at in Woolf’s 1906 *Guardian* article entitled “Portraits of Places” in which she discusses Henry James’ mental recording apparatus:

The spectacle of a professional amateur wandering over the world with his brain exposed like a very sensitive photographic film to the outward aspects of things has a singular charm [. . .]. You need merely [. . .] stroll through a town, and meanwhile all kinds of pictures are depositing themselves in your brain to be smoothed out upon a sheet of paper when the occasion presents itself. It is only what we could all of us do [. . .] if we chose to keep our eyes at the proper focus (“Portraits” 125-6).

The heart does not seem to be involved here, since James is recording surface impressions of the aspects of geographical places, and storing them rather than letting an emotional response take hold. This passage is significant, however, in its figuring of the author as a cinematic camera. The brain of the author is “exposed like a very sensitive photographic film,” and this is a process that occurs on the hoof, as the author walks the town, suggesting that successive images are affecting the sensitive film of the brain and being recorded. The eyes, which must retain a “proper focus,” are converted into camera apertures, which must be controlled by the directing consciousness. What results is, of course, literature, “smoothed out upon a sheet of paper,” but this literature will surely retain something of the cinematic about it. Not, perhaps, for Henry James, whom Woolf reads as confining himself to such entertaining surface detail, but for the author of “Portraits of Places” most certainly.

The “Portraits of Places” essay forms part of Woolf’s assessment of the contemporary trend of literary geography which sought to illuminate works of literature by tracing the geographical locations in which they were created, and those which they represented through textual description. “Literary Geography” (1905) was Woolf’s first review for the *Times Literary Supplement* and addressed two works from that genre, Lewis Melville’s *The Thackeray Country* and F.G. Kitton’s *The Dickens Country*. The two books came from a series entitled “Pilgrimage,” published by Adam and Charles Black, offering illustrated

guides to the relevant and, sometimes, irrelevant sites for their respective subjects. While the series title calls Richardson to mind, she would herself have doubts as to the point of the exercise. In an article entitled “Novels,” published in Life and Letters Today in 1948, Richardson asks: “And is not every novel a conducted tour? First and foremost into the personality of the author” (qtd. in Bronfen 5). For Richardson, the crucial topography is not the external one recorded via geographical description, but the internal one of the mind. Melville and Kitton are thus touring the wrong country in an attempt to understand the authors they seek to illumine. For Woolf, too, internal topographies were crucial – hence her infuriation with film’s focus on the surface shimmer of pearls and teeth. As Andrew Thacker has pointed out in his chapter “Virginia Woolf: Literary Geography and the Kaleidoscope of Travel,”<sup>9</sup> Woolf’s novels “constantly play across the spatial borders of inner and outer, constructing a fiction that shows how material spaces rely upon imaginative conceptualisation” (Thacker 152). The border between inner and outer, the role of the city in highlighting that border, and the use of cinematic stylistic devices to enable its transgression by the reader, are central to an understanding of Night and Day and Mrs. Dalloway. Before considering these novels, it is important to undertake a closer analysis of the two articles in which Woolf grapples with the concept of literary geography.

In “Literary Geography,” Woolf distinguishes between those who make use of geographical location as a mere backdrop to their novels, and those who undertake a more intimate relationship with the landscape in the course of their writing. Scott, the Brontës, Hardy and George Meredith are all of the latter category since they have “made the country theirs because they have so interpreted it as to have given it an ineffaceable shape in our minds” (32). A thorough engagement with place, then, sets up that place as part of the internal topography of the reader’s consciousness, such that the reader comes to know that place intimately, as if they too had experienced it. Rather than walk through the country, readers allow that country, as Richardson might claim, to walk through them. That such a process enables the reader to know described places intimately is a fact dealt with by Richardson when Miriam’s reading of Brand allows her to be “*in Norway*.” However, Woolf’s list of writers deal largely with pastoral locations; the city, and in particular London, brings its own specific problems for the writer that seeks to encapsulate its concrete spaces in mere words. Thackeray was, says Woolf, “a cosmopolitan; with London for a basis he travelled everywhere; and it follows that the characters in his books are equally

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<sup>9</sup> Thacker presumably uses this title because he sees urban travel as a kaleidoscopic experience. In this, of course, he agrees with Richardson and her kaleidoscope-obsessed Miriam Henderson.



citizens of the world [. . .] it is because he took so vast and various a subject that the only possible scene for a pilgrim in Thackeray's footsteps is the great world of London" (33). A citizen of the cosmopolis of London, Thackeray makes it the basis for an exploration of the world; as cosmopolis, London itself *contains* the world. Woolf concludes that the exercise of literary geography is diverting, in both senses of that word: an entertainment, but the wrong route to take to a true understanding of a text or its characters. Its relevance to an understanding of the author is also debatable. This is true not only for the work of Thackeray, whose London was the world and therefore evaded entrapment in the "Pilgrimage" series, but for the work of all authors. Literary geography is inappropriate because "To imprison these immortals between brick walls strikes one as an unnecessary act of violence; they have always tenanted their own houses in our brains, and we refuse to let them go elsewhere" (33). Inhabiting the internal topographies of the reader's mind, literary characters cannot be better understood by reference to the concrete world, that which has its reality beyond the text. For Woolf's characters the internal/external topography boundary is of great significance; for Woolf as reader, forcing characters back out through this barrier to the external world is pointless.

The internal/external topography model turns up towards the conclusion of Woolf's essay in relation to one further mental space: not that of the character or the reader, but that of the author, when she claims that "A writer's country is a territory within his own brain" (35). Ultimately, "No city indeed is so real as this that we make for ourselves and people to our liking" (35). Whether Woolf here refers to herself as reader or author is unclear, but "people to our liking" suggests the latter. Regardless, the reality of the city created in the mind, within the internal topography, is here more real than reality, in a parallel to the cinema's status as "more real, or real with a different reality." In "Portraits of Places" Woolf suggests that literature itself struggles to encapsulate space, since "a page stamped with printed words skims off but a thin and superficial slice on the top of it [the country]" (124). With this in mind, the exercise of literary geography seems even less justified; if literature finds the portrayal of place problematic, how would the concrete locations themselves shed light upon these struggling written works? Viewing these locations would drown out their literary correlates, since "The swiftest portrait carried off by the eye has a great many different elements in its composition" (124). Literature, a "written picture" creates a comparatively "flimsy and ineffectual veil" (124). Experience of the place in question will ruin such a flimsy written picture: "The first touch of the real thing [. . .] will be sufficient to tear the fabric asunder" (124-5). By the time of writing *Night and Day* (1919) Woolf seems

to have found a method of constructing a written picture that is robust rather than flimsy, despite the fact that it tackles the challenging cosmopolis of London. Furthermore, she peoples this picture, her internal cosmopolis, with characters whose relationship with the city breaks down the barrier between internal and external topographies. Through practices that are indebted to the haptically cinematic, she enables the reader to come into contact with the city, to allow that city to walk through them. The concerns she raises about film in "The Cinema" and about literature's capacities in "Portraits of Places" do not seem to hamper her in the novel that was written and published in the period between these two essays.

Night and Day opens with the taking of tea in the Hilbery drawing room, an event presided over by one of the novel's central characters: "Katharine Hilbery was pouring out tea. Perhaps a fifth of her mind was thus occupied, and the remaining parts leapt over the little barrier of day which interposed between Monday morning and this rather subdued moment" (Night 3). This opening scene operates in a similar way to many within Richardson's Pilgrimage, where additional recollected or imagined spaces pile up around the present concrete spatial experience. It is a strategy of which Woolf also makes use in a later work, The Years (1937). In the foregoing quotation such spatial layering or simultaneity is due to a kind of drift in consciousness brought about by routine. Katharine is so accustomed to the daily ritual of tea that her mind takes flight, moving towards other remembered or imagined locations, having leapt over the "little barrier of day." When Katharine later speaks with Ralph, such layering again occurs, and a key recollected space in this moment is in fact the Hilbery drawing room at this same tea time: "This remark, and the rough strain in his voice, recalled to her memory so many difficult speeches and abortive meetings that she was jerked directly back to the London drawing-room, the family relics, and the tea-table" (244-5). On a subsequent walk with Ralph Denham, Katharine's interest in astronomy splits her attention between her present companion and the stars. This split is so extreme as to make her feel bodily emplaced at two locations in simultaneity: "and all the time she was in fancy looking up through a telescope at white shadow-cleft disks which were other worlds, until she felt herself possessed of two bodies, one walking by the river with Denham, the other concentrated to a silver globe aloft in the fine blue space above the scum of vapours that was covering the visible world" (315). That this "fine blue space" is above the "scum of vapours" of the Embankment suggests that it is a heavenly, pure space of redemption or transcendence. While Katharine's investment in the value of this space stems from her interest in the stars as objects of scientific study rather than from a religious sensibility, this

space does generate an ecstatic experience, one in which she comes to be beside herself, and embodied in both locations.

For Mrs. Hilbery, a slightly modified version of this layering or simultaneity of spaces occurs, as her obsession with her ancestors and their literary achievements means that she lives in a present not so much haunted by as co-inhabited with the past. This cohabitation is literalised within the Hilbery residence in that a museum room containing “the family relics,” items relating to their most prominent forebear, adjoins the drawing room, separated only by a curtain. She asks: “After all, what *is* the present? Half of it’s the past, and the better half, too, I should say” (9). Her valorisation of the past is the source of her fetish for the works of Shakespeare, and the root of her inability to complete a biography of her forebear Richard Alardyce, since the wonder of all things past is too overwhelming for her to establish the irrelevance of any material. The ever-evolving shrine to Alardyce is thus also a shrine to the literary past in general, and is a literal rendering of Woolf’s tactic of layering up recollections around concrete spaces.

When Ralph observes Katharine in the opening tea time scene, the narrative voice tells us that he notes the following: “although silent, she kept sufficient control of the situation to answer immediately her mother appealed to her for help, and yet it was obvious to him that she attended only with the surface skin of her mind” (7). As with the foregoing Brunoean reading of Miriam’s picturesque garden, internal and external topographies are here juxtaposed. In Woolf’s description this juxtaposition is so intimate that a touching occurs between these two realms, as the “skin” of the mind, the mind’s metaphoric organ of touch, is the point of contact between the two. The intimate relationship between internal and external topographies is central to the novel. This relationship is experienced as particularly acute by Katharine, Ralph and Mary Datchet. For each of these characters the “surface skin” of the mind, the contact point between the internal topography of the private space of consciousness and the public, tilting, sensory bombardment of the kaleidoscope city is consistently disturbed. As a result, external experience of the concrete urban topography can bring about certain changes in mental states, just as those states alter the way in which the external topography is perceived by the mind. The novel’s first explicit reference to this tendency within Ralph illustrates the touching of the mind’s skin: “A turn of the street, a firelit room, something monumental in the procession of the lamp-posts, who shall say what accident of life or shape had suddenly changed the prospect within his mind” (19). In this scenario, a shake or shift in the urban kaleidoscope creates a chance impression on his mind,

and he falls in love with Katharine, or at least identifies her for the first time as a suitable object of his desire.

Mary is subject to her own version of Ralph's experience of architecture or location as a form of mental trigger, a touching topography butted up against an internal prospect. Woolf writes that, contemplating the workforce of the London offices, "Mary used to figure to herself a straight rabbit-run worn by their unswerving feet upon the pavement" (76). Walking similar streets on her way to the suffrage organisation for which she works, Mary has her own regular path:

Once or twice lately, it is true, she had started, broad awake, before turning into Russell Square, and denounced herself rather sharply for being already in a groove, capable, that is, of thinking the same thoughts every morning at the same hour, so that the chestnut-coloured brick of the Russell Square houses had some curious connexion with her thoughts about office economy (77).

Again external topography has an effect upon the consciousness. Here the habitual walks of the former have created the equivalent in the latter, with "mental grooves" in parallel with the "rabbit-runs" of Mary's habituated feet. In this way a "curious connexion" is established between the houses of Russell Square and corners of Mary's thoughts, themselves frequently traversed as she returns to old themes and dwells on customary preoccupations. The connection between tracks of the feet and tracks of the mind is reiterated later in the novel when Mary is struggling to adequately explore and order her feelings toward Ralph during a solitary walk in the city:

She fully intended to use her loneliness to think out her position with regard to Ralph; but although she walked back to the Strand with this end in view, she found her mind uncomfortably full of different trains of thought. She started one and then another. They seemed even to take their colour from the street she happened to be in. Thus the vision of humanity appeared to be in some way connected with Bloomsbury, and faded distinctly by the time she crossed the main road; then a belated organgrinder in Holborn set her thoughts dancing incongruously; and by the time she was crossing the great misty square of Lincoln's Inn Fields, she was cold and depressed again, and horribly clear-sighted (175-6).

Throughout this passage the urban environment interacts with Mary's consciousness, which is peculiarly topographically attuned. At first Mary seeks to control this process herself, deliberately selecting the Strand as an ideal space in which to clarify her thoughts. Her movement from street to street prevents the establishment of a coherent train of thought, since the "colour" of each street, the shifting elements of the kaleidoscope, creates varying impressions in her mind. Bloomsbury prompts a vision of humanity, the main road causes a



fading of that vision, Holborn makes her thoughts dance, and the mist of Lincoln's Inn Fields clears the mental mists of her confusion. Ultimately Mary does, then, arrive at a degree of clarity, but the city has played its part in making the mental journey toward that clarity as varied as the physical experience of the bodily journey she undertakes. The narrative voice notes that "all these different states of mind were submerged in the deep flood of desires, thoughts, perceptions, antagonisms, which washed perpetually at the base of her being, to rise into prominence in turn when the conditions of the upper world were favourable" (176). Again a relationship is established between the "favourable" conditions of the "upper world," which may be read as the urban environment, and the rise into the conscious mind of certain thoughts or feelings. That the internal topography of consciousness is itself split into "base" and "prominence" continues the spatialisation of the relationship between mind and city.

In the foregoing quotation, Mary selects the Strand as a suitable space for the undertaking of a specific mental task. Her use of geography in this manner is paralleled by the behaviour of Katharine, who later asks:

should she walk on by the Strand or by the Embankment? It was not a simple question, for it concerned not different streets so much as different streams of thought. If she went by the Strand she would force herself to think out the problem of the future, or some mathematical problem; if she went by the river she would certainly begin to think about things that didn't exist – the forest, the ocean beach, the leafy solitudes (282).

Katharine, like Mary, associates the Strand with mental clarity and the untangling of issues of the heart. The Embankment, as in the case of her ecstatic walk with Ralph, leads her to think of other worlds. Forest, ocean and "leafy solitudes" do of course exist elsewhere in the world, but the actual concrete space of the Embankment does not contain them, and merely draws them in to Katharine's thoughts. Again, the Embankment is operating as a space that appends a second world to the present one. The connection between external and internal topographies is not, of course, restricted to the urban environment, although as the above examples demonstrate the kaleidoscopic nature of the city has a particular effect upon the mind. Mary's father, the Reverend Wyndham Datchet, lives in rural Disham, near Lincoln, and he, too, uses space as a mental trigger. In his flower garden he connects walking with recollection: "He had most of Horace by heart, and had got into the habit of connecting this particular walk with certain odes which he repeated duly" (184). This flower garden is perhaps operating in the manner of the picturesque garden as Bruno describes it, since a



certain ordered pattern of walks creates a sequence of views, and there is a connection to narrative (Horace's odes) as well as the internal/external topographical correlation.

Mary's purposeless walk in Charing Cross again illustrates the influence of the urban environment on the surface skin of the mind, and also introduces the problem of how this might be captured in a coherent narrative. The chaotic urban environment contrasts with the narrative sequence of views of the picturesque garden, and the mind must make its own effort to generate a narrative from the fragments of its perception:

Strange thoughts are bred in passing through crowded streets should the passenger, by chance, have no exact destination in front of him, much as the mind shapes all kinds of forms, solutions, images when listening inattentively to music. [. . .] She wished she had a pencil and a piece of paper to help her to give a form to this conception which composed itself as she walked down the Charing Cross Road. [. . .] It only needed a persistent effort of thought, stimulated in this strange way by the crowd and the noise, to climb the crest of existence and see it all laid out once and for ever (270-1).

While conceptions compose themselves as she passes aimlessly through the streets, the act of writing will give coherence to the narrative, and will order experience. The mention of a pencil bringing order to purposeless wandering is recalled in the later essay "Street Haunting: A London Adventure" in which the purchasing of a pencil gives Woolf "an object, an excuse for walking half across London between tea and dinner" ("Street" 1), and as such generates the narrative of the essay itself. The problem of ordering urban experience into a linear narrative is again expressed through the symbol of the pencil when Katharine attempts to write a letter to Ralph. Having criss-crossed the city frantically looking for him, Katharine finds that her thoughts fight composition: "Her wants were so vast [. . .] that the pencil was utterly inadequate to conduct them on to the paper; it seemed as if the whole torrent of Kingsway had to run down her pencil" (*Night* 464). Woolf's own appreciation of the challenges and complexities involved in transcribing urban experience is surely a contributory factor in the representation of the writing experience as an attempt to let the flood of the Kingsway stream down the pencil.

One particular element of the external city environment that contributes to a bombardment of the senses is the urban crowd. Katharine's experience of the crowd is one of both disorientation and invigoration, and while incorporated within it she becomes physically and mentally distanced from her walking companion, Ralph. The crowd, we are told, "exhilarated her to such an extent that she very nearly forgot her companion. She walked very fast, and the effect of people passing in the opposite direction was to produce a

queer dizziness both in her head and in Ralph's, which set their bodies far apart" (93). The passing images of the crowd are mesmerising, causing Katharine to forget certain elements of her current situation such as the presence of Ralph, as she is bombarded by shifting sensory information. Subsequently, Katharine reconnects to the presence of Ralph and speaks to him, "waking a little from the trance into which movement among moving things had thrown her" (94). This mesmeric, trance-inducing quality of walking in a crowd recurs when Katharine traverses Bond Street with her mother: "The flow of faces streaming on either side of her had hypnotized her into a mood of profound despondency" (281). Again the urban environment is seen to have a significant effect upon the internal mental and emotional spheres of the body. Woolf frequently uses aquatic imagery to describe the perceptual experience of the bustling city, and references to flows and streams of human or mechanised traffic are common, for example in the Embankment's "stream of cabs and omnibuses" (315). Such imagery is used most extensively in the description of Katharine's experience of her frantic search for Ralph. While it emphasises sensory bombardment, and while Katharine's mission is a pressing one, the connotations of the imagery are not negative, since she revels in the city's swarming activity:

The great *torrent* of vans and carts was *sweeping* down Kingsway; pedestrians were *streaming* in two *currents* along the pavements. She stood fascinated at the corner. The *deep roar* filled her ears; the changing *tumult* had the inexpressible fascination of varied life *pouring* ceaselessly with a purpose which, as she looked, seemed to her, somehow, the normal purpose for which life was framed; its complete indifference to the individuals, whom it *swallowed up* and *rolled onwards*, filled her with at least a temporary exaltation. [. . .] They tended the enormous *rush* of the *current* – the *great flow*, the *deep stream*, the *unquenchable tide*. She stood unobserved and absorbed, glorying openly in the rapture that had *run* subterraneously all day (462-3, my emphases).

While the aquatic imagery is foregrounded through excessive repetition, bringing great rivers and oceans to mind, the cinematic also plays a key role in this passage. Katharine, a stationary observer, looks on in "rapture" at the flowing motion picture provided by London's tides. In this context, the phrase "life was framed" takes on a rather different meaning.

London is depicted as flowing spectacle, with a hypnotic, mesmeric quality inducing rapture in the observer, and Woolf in this way underscores its inherently cinematic quality. *Night and Day* also appears at times to be indebted to the cinematic on the level of narrative technique, and not only through the use of stream of consciousness writing. Mary is in her rooms when the chimes of the hour ring out in Westminster: "As the last of them died away, there was a firm knocking on her own door, and she rose and opened it. She returned to the

room, with a look of steady pleasure in her eyes, and she was talking to Ralph Denham, who followed her" (46). The construction of this scene is deceptively simple. At first glance it seems that Mary merely leaves the room, greets Ralph at the door, and leads him into her rooms. Yet there is a jump in the narrative between her exit from the room and opening of the door, and her return to the room, already involved in a conversation with Ralph. The reader must assume that the greeting scene has occurred, and that the conversation begins in a customary manner, for this information is not given; it is, rather, edited out as unnecessary to an understanding of the narrative as a whole. Further, we are told "She returned to the room [. . .] and *she was talking* to Ralph Denham," as if the narrating consciousness/camera remains in Mary's rooms while she goes to the door, and thus we are only privy to the sight of Mary returning, her conversation already begun. It is an incidental scene illustrating only Mary's growing attachment to Ralph, but the means of its presentation show Woolf's attempts not only to describe the city in ways which make it sound like a cinematic spectacle, but to use cinematic stylistic techniques to give a full, moving picture of urban life.

Night and Day contains many urban enthusiasts. Mary highlights the joy, disorientation and cinematically luminous spectacle of the city when her consciousness appears to infuse the narrative voice, which records "the wonderful maze of London, which still seemed to her [. . .] like a vast electric light, casting radiance upon the myriads of men and women who crowded round it. And here she was at the very centre of it all" (46). William Rodney, while recommending emigration to Ralph, states "'I'm often on the point of going myself. And then I know I couldn't live without this' – and he waved his hand towards the City of London" (71). Mary agrees, describing London as "a fine place to live in" (165). This enthusiasm for the city is shared by the characters of Mrs. Dalloway, as well as by Woolf herself, as her inclination to walk across half of the city "between tea and dinner" indicates. Mary, in the above quotation, thinks of herself as privileged to be "at the very centre of it all." Her love for London is connected to her absorption or submergence within the ebbs and flows of the city. On a broader level, London itself is envisaged as central to a wider network of geographical sites, a true cosmopolis. The suffrage organisation for which Mary works is repeatedly conceived, by its key office staff, as geographically central to an expanding network of connections. Mary's hopes for the social and political success of the organisation are crucially tied to its domination of space, the reduction of distance: "Mary felt, at last, that she was the centre ganglion of a very fine network of nerves which fell over England, and one of these days, [. . .] would begin feeling

and rushing together and emitting their splendid blaze of revolutionary fireworks" (79). Later we learn that the office team of Mary, Mr. Clacton and Mrs. Seal "all felt an agreeable sense [. . .] of having their hands upon strings which, when pulled, would completely change the pageant exhibited daily to those who read the newspapers" (175). Again spatial centrality leads to power, progress and success. In a particularly zealous moment, Mr. Clacton informs his colleagues that "'We must try to consider ourselves rather in the light of a telephone exchange [. . .]. We should consider ourselves the centre of an enormous system of wires, connecting us up with every district of the country" (267). The reference to a technology of the triumph over distance turns strings to be pulled into communicative wires. Mrs. Hilbery's passion for the past leads her to be sceptical of the positive nature of such new technologies, and she later responds to the persistent ringing of a telephone in her own home by observing: "My dear, how odious the triumphs of science are! [. . .] They'll be linking us with the moon next" (323). Given her view that the past is the better part of the present, this attitude toward technological innovation is understandable, and it offers a neat contrast with Mr. Clacton's politically revolutionary and enthusiastically technological outlook. Even the rather ineffective Mrs. Seal eventually turns to images of geographical reach in her effort to conceptualise the ongoing work of the suffrage organisation: "she felt that it was at this exact spot on the surface of the globe that all the subterranean wires of thought and progress came together" (277). Mary's suffrage office is in these ways seen as the epicentre of a network, while the city in which it is contained is conceived of as cosmopolis and all-engulfing ocean, full of flows and currents that invigorate its inhabitants.

Night and Day may be read as a love story between Katharine and Ralph as well as a portrait of London and an assessment of the value of literary history. Katharine and Ralph are united as lovers following the former's search for the latter amongst the multiple streams of the city. More importantly, their union occurs once Katharine has found a way not only to locate Ralph within London's vast scope, but to control that scope by translating it into an internal topography, a city in the mind that recalls Woolf's "Portraits of Places" observations. Katharine, in attempting to follow the elusive Ralph across the city, creates an imaginary London that makes her task possible: "If only she could read the names of those visionary streets down which he passed! [. . .] instead of helping herself to any decision, she only filled her mind with the vast extent of London and the impossibility of finding any single figure that wandered off this way and that way" (465). A little later, and still unable to find Ralph, she repeats this exercise: "Katharine was once more irresistibly drawn to gaze upon an imaginary map of London, to follow the twists and turns of unnamed streets" (468).

This three dimensional imagined map of London is a dream of control over the concrete space of the city, enabled by the passage of that city through the skin of the mind to be built within Katharine's internal topography. The city, for Katharine, really does come to walk through her, an experience that parallels Richardson's description of the cinematic. Ralph's final falling in love is represented within the narrative by an ability to walk through the skin of Katharine's mind and into the habitable space of her imaginary city. At his encouragement, she makes a broken statement about a fire, "making him feel that he had stepped over the threshold into the faintly lit vastness of another mind, stirring with shapes, so large, so dim, unveiling themselves only in flashes, and moving away again into the darkness, engulfed by it" (531). It is, of course, possible to read echoes of a description of the cinema in this passage. Within Night and Day several characters haptically touch the city's external topography with this skin of the mind, experiencing shifts in the internal topography of their consciousness as a result. Sometimes such an experience is thrust upon them, as they are caught up in the flows of the city's streams; at other times, they select the currents/streets that they enter in order to bring about certain internal shifts. Movement is almost always involved in such touching, whether it be a purposeful or purposeless wander in the streets on the part of a protagonist, or the flow of streams of traffic or pedestrians past the stationary observer. Creating a narrative from such encounters with the kaleidoscopic city is a challenge given the pace of change in the cosmopolis city; characters experience this problem in a way that reflects the challenge facing Woolf herself.

Woolf's later novel Mrs. Dalloway (1925) is much discussed as a text concerned with the representation of the modernist city, and as one structured around walking in an urban environment. However, the novel may also be regarded as a text peculiarly engaged with the cinematic. Making use of stream of consciousness and "cinematic linking devices" (Showalter xxiii) such as the aerial sign-writing aeroplane, the novel is stylistically indebted to the cinema. Gevirtz has claimed that "Contrast editing and intercutting were among the first techniques used to render simultaneity in film. They made it possible to splice open a moment and insert other perspectives or to insert the actions leading up to that point as if occurring simultaneously" (Gevirtz 42). This technical description of the capacities of early cinema aptly describes Woolf's use of the aeroplane as a sight simultaneously beheld by a range of characters, and supports Elaine Showalter's designation of the plane as a "linking device." It may also be argued that the modes of perception used by Mrs. Dalloway's protagonists are haptic. This haptic connection, a love of the city on the part of the central characters, and a peculiar connection between internal and external topographies, link the



novel with Night and Day. However, the narrative techniques of Mrs. Dalloway set it apart as a more experimental work. Several key features of the novel – love of London, an internal/external topographical connection, Woolf's narrative innovations – are united in the following, much discussed passage from the opening of the book:

For Heaven only knows why one loves it so, how one sees it so, making it up, building it round one, tumbling it, creating it every moment afresh [. . .]. In people's eyes, in the swing, tramp, and trudge; in the bellow and the uproar; the carriages, motor cars, omnibuses, vans, sandwich men shuffling and swinging; brass bands; barrel organs; in the triumph and the jingle and the strange high singing of some aeroplane overhead was what she loved; life; London; this moment of June (Dalloway 4).

Clarissa Dalloway's walk through the city draws into the narrative sights and sounds familiar from urban descriptions elsewhere in the work of Woolf, and indeed of Richardson. What is distinctive here is the precise manner of the perception of these sights and sounds and their textual representation. Woolf's extended, fragmented sentences, making extensive use of the semi-colon, create streams of impressions that reflect the mobility of the observer. Yet the individual elements of the sentences are jaggedly juxtaposed, such that the only thing connecting the brass band to the barrel organ to the aeroplane is their contribution to a continuous stream of perception. The city is again throwing up chance confluences of impressions. When Clarissa (for here her consciousness takes over the narrative) suggests that one *tumbles* the impressions of the city, she recalls the kaleidoscope that Richardson used as a central metaphor for city experience. The means of Clarissa's gathering of this sensory impression of the city, its sights and sounds, is her walking. By walking in the city she is part of its spectacle and also its observer. Katharine's experience of the flows of London was always trance-inducing, but more positive when she was able to feel herself a distanced observer rather than being simply buffeted by the crowd. Clarissa's ambiguous status as observer/participant is crucial to her observations: "She sliced like a knife through everything; at the same time was outside, looking on" (8-9). Clarissa's identity as a slicing knife brings to mind Benjamin's understanding of the cinematic camera as a surgeon's scalpel, and to view her as a camera recording an urban film is a helpful way to bring the participant/observer roles together. Aside from a role as camera, her identity is fluid, precisely because of the flows of urban life: "She knew nothing; no language, no history; [. . .] and yet to her it was absolutely absorbing; all this; the cabs passing; and she would not say of Peter, she would not say of herself, I am this, I am that" (9). The opening of this quotation is part of her musing on the poverty of her education, her "few twigs of knowledge Fräulein Daniels gave them" (9). In the context of the wider question of identity, however, to know

no language and no history is to be free of a defining national identity or past. For Clarissa as roving urban camera, all ties are lost as she plunges herself into London's flows.

This early scene of Clarissa's walk makes considerable use of the cinematic in addition to the implication of Clarissa herself as camera. Her perception of Bond Street takes on the quality of film as a series of framed impressions are provided by the shop windows: "Bond Street fascinated her; [ . . . ] its flags flying; its shops; no splash; no glitter, one roll of tweed in their shop where her father had bought his suits for fifty years; a few pearls; salmon on an iceblock" (11). Here she is a cinematic spectator, rather than herself a camera. This filmic procession of images occurs alongside the passing of the mysterious car, thought to be the Prime Minister's, which presents its own dark screens of blind-covered windows to the gawping masses on Bond Street and beyond. There then appears the sign-writing plane which, observed by a disparate selection of Londoners, works as a cinematic stylistic device to link several stories. In fact, "As they looked the whole world became perfectly silent" (22). Such is the power of this linking device that the whole of London, conceived of here as the "whole world," falls silent. The trajectory of the aeroplane is given a cinematic treatment, from panning shots to extreme close-ups: "soaring over Greenwich and all the masts; over the little island of grey churches [ . . . ] till, on either side of London, fields spread out [ . . . ] where adventurous thrushes, hopping boldly [ . . . ] snatched the snail and tapped him on a stone" (30). A similar combination of broad and close shots is used, of course, in "Flying over London."

When Peter Walsh walks in the city he contemplates his recent life in colonial India, meaning that his internal topography of recollection contrasts sharply with the external topography of his current experience. Given his time away from London, much has changed in the city, such that his memories do not match with the city today. Present London, past London, and the intervening India of his recent adventures thus clamour for his attention. Eventually, recollected India passes out through the skin of his mind, and moves into present day London's concrete space: "And there he was, this fortunate man, himself, reflected in the plate-glass window of a motor-car manufacturer in Victoria Street. All India lay behind him; plains, mountains; epidemics of cholera; a district twice as big as Ireland; decisions he had come to alone – he, Peter Walsh" (53). The plate-glass window acts as a screen onto which his internal topography is projected, and thus it is incorporated into the city as a whole. He recollects his autonomous control over the district of colonial India of which he was governor, and perhaps this makes that space more easily navigable than the

disorientatingly modern metropolis which has undergone such change in his absence. A little later, standing in Trafalgar Square, Peter ponders the strangeness of his largely unacknowledged return to London, and his status as an unknown figure for those in his immediate proximity. Such strangeness eventually gives way to “an irrepressible, exquisite delight” (57), when a second city is established within his mind, its streets inviting his feet to walk them: “as if inside his brain by another hand strings were pulled, shutters moved, and he, having nothing to do with it, yet stood at the opening of endless avenues, down which if he chose he might wander” (57). These avenue openings down which chance or whim might lead him suggest the aimless wandering of the *flâneur*, and having thus contemplated *flânerie* in his internal, mental city, Peter undertakes it in London itself, when he follows a young woman until she disappears into her home.

For Peter, the urban experience is a bodily one, and not merely in the sexual sense implied by his pursuit of the young woman in the latter scene. When he moves from the city into the domestic space of the Dalloway residence, the work of the body and of the eye give way to mental exertions: “The cold stream of visual impressions failed him now as if the eye were a cup that overflowed and let the rest run down its china walls unrecorded. The brain must wake now. The body must contract now, entering the house” (180). Of course the “cold stream of visual impressions” draws attention to the city as aquatic and flowing, and to its cinematic quality in the generation of motion pictures. The slumbering brain implies the lack of thought attributed to cinema audiences, with which both Woolf and Richardson have dealt. Marcus has identified an important quotation from Woolf’s diaries, written towards the end of 1918 while *Night and Day* was still in progress: “I keep thinking of different ways to manage my scenes; conceiving endless possibilities; seeing life, as I walk about the streets, an immense opaque block of material to be conveyed by me into its equivalent of language” (qtd. in Marcus, *Woolf* 63). Woolf here makes explicit the relevance of her own urban experiences in the creation of her fictional work. In describing a generic walk in the city she slips into the heavy use of semi-colon that will characterise the description of such experience in *Mrs. Dalloway*. The possibilities suggested by the city are “endless,” again making reference to its kaleidoscopic quality. Woolf’s task is to translate these sensory perceptions into a linguistic “equivalent,” the particular use of this term implying that her effort will be to generate a parallel readerly experience of the urban, to affect the sensibilities rather than to merely describe. The term that Woolf selects is not, significantly, “translate,” but “convey.” With this reference to movement she highlights the fact that her urban texts are crucially structured around passage, where that term yokes together both

writing and bodily movement. While Night and Day and Mrs. Dalloway use walking as the key means of moving through the urban sphere, they do also record travel by mechanised vehicle, including cabs and omnibuses. Throughout Woolf's work is evident a fascination with the various forms of mechanised transport available to her age, such that many of her novels may be termed narratives of travel, if not travel narratives. The cinematic aspect of mechanised transport sees the city pass the eye of the static/mobile observer as a kind of rolling spectacle, a motion picture. Given that this chapter has already identified a connection between moving pictures and the haptic sense, an exploration of mechanised transport in the urban sphere is essential to a full understanding of Woolf's writing in haptic terms.

### **(E)motion: The Touching Experience of Urban Travel**

Revising "Modern Fiction" for its 1925 re-publication, Woolf substitutes a motorcar for the bicycle that had offered an analogy for contemporary writing in the earlier 1919 version. Both Thacker and Makiko Minow-Pinkney have noted this fact, and see it as symptomatic of the increasingly central place taken in Woolf's work by the latest developments in mechanised transport (Thacker 183; Minow-Pinkney 161). As Minow-Pinkney points out, this central placement is partly due to the proliferation of the motorcar in wider society, resulting from a significant increase in production within this period. John Stevenson states that in 1924, 146,000 motor vehicles were produced in Britain (Stevenson 110), meaning that in the interests of verisimilitude Woolf would have been compelled to include them in any depiction of her contemporary era. Woolf at first saw the shift toward mechanised transport, and in particular the rising popularity of the motorcar, as a dangerous and socially destructive development. As her essay on the cinema demonstrates, a period of ambivalence can greet the dawning of a new technological era within a given sphere of everyday life. In the case of the motorcar, however, Woolf was not so much ambivalent about this new technology as entirely hostile to it, and yet she subsequently came to be fanatically interested in its possibilities. In a paragraph contributed to the "From Alpha to Omega" column in the Nation and Atheneum in 1924, later published under the heading "The Cheapening of Motor-cars," Woolf bemoaned this development and expressed anger at the fact that the humble pedestrian now found him/herself imperilled:

The cheapening of motor-cars is another step towards the ruin of the country road. It is already almost impossible to take one's pleasure walking [. . .] on the high road the procession of vehicles is irregular and chaotic, and the pedestrian



has to depend upon the consideration and humanity of the motorist, who is in a position to dispense with both if it suits him. [. . .] The English road, moreover, is rapidly losing its old character [. . .] its flowery and untidy hedges; its quiet; its ancient and irregular charm. It is becoming, instead, black as cinders, smooth as oil cloth, shaven of wild flowers, straightened of corners, a mere racing-track for the convenience of a population seemingly in perpetual and frantic haste not to be late for dinner ("Cheapening" 440).

In this unequivocally negative passage, Woolf sees the motorcar as the source of social, moral and floral destruction; even a threat to humanity itself. Woolf's diary entry for Wednesday the 8 April 1927 records the genuine danger presented by the motorcar to the pedestrian when she records having seen an accident which has left "a woman crying Oh oh oh faintly, pinned against the railings with a motor car on top of her" (Woolf, *Diary* 6-7). Despite this anger towards the vehicle, its growing presence within British life earned it a place in "Modern Fiction" at the expense of the humble bicycle.

Yet Woolf's opinion on the motorcar was to shift dramatically, after the Woolfs purchased their own dangerous machine on 15 July 1927, just three months after Woolf's traumatic encounter with the latter accident. Prior to this purchase, and for a considerable time after it, Woolf's diary becomes filled with references to the car, a second-hand Singer. The first key reference to motorcar travel enters the diary after the subject has already absorbed Woolf's life and that of her immediate family and social circle: "I have never mentioned the absorbing subject – the subject which has filled our thoughts to the exclusion of Clive & Mary & literature & death & life – motor cars. [. . .] We talk of nothing but cars" (*Diary* 146-7). Having already taken on a greater significance than matters of life and death, the motorcar, when it arrives, has a major impact on the lives of Woolf and Leonard: "This is a great opening up in our lives. One may go to Bodiam, to Arundel, explore the Chichester downs, expand that curious thing, the map of the world in ones mind. It will I think demolish loneliness, & may of course imperil complete privacy" (*Diary* 147). The "opening up" facilitated by the motorcar is spiritual, in terms of a sense of freedom, literal or geographical in its reduction of the problem of distance, and metaphorical in that not only a geographical map but a mental map is constructed and traversed. While the ability to cover great distances in considerably shorter spaces of time than previous modes of transport had allowed abolishes loneliness by linking Woolf to distant sites and distant friends, it also threatens privacy. This threat to privacy presumably comes in the form of expectations of visits by the Woolfs to others, regardless of distance, and the possibility of their own home life being disrupted by visitors from afar, themselves in possession of motorcars. The threat to privacy is a minor concern, anticipated rather than experienced, and far outweighed by the



positive elements that the Singer brings into Woolf's daily life. The purchase of the car has been transformative, and Woolf sees it as a kind of Karmic return for her literary labours in completing To the Lighthouse: "The world gave me this for writing The Lighthouse, I reflect" (Diary 147).

Such is the impact of the motorcar that it changes Woolf's perceptive faculties, and the shape of her imagination – not exclusively during the process of travelling, but at all moments. By Saturday 23 July, just eight days after the Singer is purchased, Woolf writes: "All images are now tinged with driving a motor. Here I think of letting my engine work, with my clutch out" (Diary 149). Just as walking in London has provided Woolf with material about which to write and a manner of conceptualising the writing process, so the motorcar comes to do likewise. It at once shapes her literal vision, her mental conceptualisations, and her understanding of her own literary endeavours. Such an experience also, of course, finds its way into her work. The year of the Singer produces "Evening over Sussex: Reflections in a Motor Car," thought to have been written in the late summer of 1927, although posthumously published in 1942. In 1928 Woolf produced the extended driving scene within Orlando. The impact of driving remains crucial to her writing in the coming decade, and recurs in the considerably later work The Years. The particular experience of motorcar travel, its impact on Woolf as a writer, and its representation within her novels as a key experience for her characters is of major importance in any study of travel or movement within her work.

By August 1927, Woolf is in a position to summarise the experience of motorcar travel and its impact upon both her and Leonard: "Yes, the motor is turning out to be the joy of our lives, an additional life, free & mobile & airy to live alongside our usual stationary industry. We spin off to Falmer [. . .] return for tea, all light and easy as a hawk in the air" (Diary 151). This Autumn proves to be one defined by the experience of motorcar travel: "We have motored most days. We opened one little window when we bought the gramophone; now another opens with the motor" (Diary 151). Describing the compelling nature of motorcar travel, she suggests "What I like, or one of the things I like, about motoring is the sense it gives one of lighting accidentally, like a voyager who touches another planet with the tip of his toe, upon scenes which would have gone on, have always gone on, will go on, unrecorded, save for this chance glimpse" (Diary 153). Within these Autumn reflections are contained many elements of motorcar travel that Woolf came to draw on when thinking further about her own experiences of motoring, or when representing

such experiences on the part of her characters within her literary work. While Woolf writes of the “additional life” of motoring in order to draw attention to the contrast provided with the Woolfs’ work in writing and editing, the notion of a split self resulting from mechanised travel turns up in key passages in Woolf’s autobiographical and fictional writing, as will be seen. The characterisation of the Woolfs in their motor as “a hawk in the air” draws attention to the scope of observation that is provided by travelling at speed across an extensive geographical distance. To be able to perceive a panoramic overview of the passing countryside or cityscape is a new privilege unavailable without the aid of mechanised transport. The “one little window” opened by the gramophone is seen as a precursor to the window opened by the motorcar, placing the latter in the context of recent technological developments. The gramophone opens a window into other times and spaces at which recordings were made, and similarly the motorcar has an impact upon the perception of both time and space, through its speed and its ability to afford a panoramic view. The mention of the window also of course draws attention to the fact that closed cars, of which the Singer was one, offered a mediated and framed view of the passing countryside or cityscape. Creating a framed spectacle that suggests a narrative places motorcar travel in the trajectory of protocinematic development that Bruno identifies as leading from such entertainments as the panorama and the picturesque garden towards the cinema. In the latter connection, Woolf’s description of motorcar travel as allowing the participant a sense of being “like a voyager who touches another planet” is significant. If the motion pictures of the cinema, and those of walking in the city, enable a touching experience in a Brunoean sense, then it seems logical to presume that the experience of mechanised transport will do the same.

Just as Katharine Hilbery failed in her attempt to let the torrent of Kingsway flood down her pencil, and in so doing echoed Woolf’s own problematic attempts to capture the urban, so motorcar travel provides a sensory overload that can only with difficulty be marshalled into a narrative. The flood of images provided by travel at speed is akin to the bombardment that the urban dweller undergoes. In “Evening over Sussex...” Woolf reports that:

one is overcome by beauty extravagantly greater than one could expect [. . .] one’s perceptions blow out rapidly like balls in the air, and then, when all seems blown to its fullest and tautest, with beauty and beauty and beauty, a pin pricks; it collapses. [. . .] So far as I could tell, the pin had something to do with one’s own impotency. I cannot hold this – I cannot express this – I am overcome by it – I am mastered. [. . .] And further, there was another prick of the pin: one was wasting one’s chance; for beauty spread at one’s right hand, at one’s left; at one’s back too; it was escaping all the time; one could only offer a thimble to a torrent that could fill baths, lakes (82-3).

The use of the word "torrent" links this passage to the flow of sensory perception that Katharine experiences in the bustle of London, as well as to her form of literary impotence or, more properly, literary inadequacy. The idea of beauty "escaping all the time" hints at the issues of the moment that have been addressed above, as the future, or the not yet seen, is figured as the in-rolling material that the eye will perceive and the mind will come to know. As with Katharine when she is faced by the oncoming flow of the crowd at the Embankment and becomes split into an earthly and ethereal self, so Woolf too in her writer's panic splits her self: "But relinquish, I said (it is well known how in circumstances like these the self splits up and one self is eager and dissatisfied and the other stern and philosophical), relinquish these impossible aspirations; be content with the view in front of us, and believe me when I tell you it is best to sit and soak; to be passive" (83). Given that this description is written in the year following "The Cinema" it is perhaps natural that Woolf's counsel to her other self to sit and absorb the moving picture presented by the motorcar's window begins to sound like a cinematic experience, in which the mind is quietened so that the eye can engage. The fact that this motoring is being undertaken in the evening also suggests a cinematic environment, and it is worth noting that the driving scene within *Orlando* is also undertaken at dusk. Woolf eventually splits into three "I" positions, with her narrating self recording the battle between the two selves, "eager" and "stern." The writing self is the one that engages with the moment, again returning to the notion of an in-rolling future, and the past streaming behind the perceiving human self: "I said to myself: Gone, gone; over, over; past and done with, past and done with. I feel life left behind even as the road is left behind. We have been over that stretch and are already forgotten. There, windows were lit by our lamps for a second; the light is out now" (84). The repetition of words and phrases here emphasises the rhythm of the motorcar's journey when travelling at constant speed, yet more than a rhythmic passing of sites is spoken of here. It may be that the dark windows lit in passing and the headlamps of the car in which Woolf's selves travel can be seen in parallel to cinematic screens and the light of the projector. This is further supported by Woolf's review of the day's adventures: "Let me see; there was a good deal of beauty brought in today [. . .] also there was disappearance and the death of the individual. The vanishing road and the window lit for a second and then dark. And then there was the sudden dancing light, that was hung in the future" (83). The combination of sensory bombardment and subsequent writerly anxiety occurs in "Evening over Sussex..." in Katharine's scene in *Night and Day*, and in "Street Haunting..." and in each case split selves also occur. Movement, and the cinematic apprehension of movement, further link

these episodes. Questions of identity, and a touching engagement with the sites/sights seen, either metaphorically in their affecting beauty, or literally in the traveller's touch of new planets, are also raised.

Transposing her experience of motorcar travel into the fictional rather than autobiographical context, Woolf again raises these latter issues, and throughout the motorcar's facilitation of a motion picture is of primary importance. In *Orlando* the arrival of the motorcar is a shock, just as it had been a shock to Woolf's rural lanes. In the novel, it arrives as the first indication of a shift from the Victorian to the Edwardian era, and is the start of Orlando's adventures in the contemporary: "'Look at that!' she exclaimed, some days later when an absurd truncated carriage without any horses began to glide about of its own accord" (*Orlando* 205). The technology that enables a carriage to move without the aid of horses is a mystery, a puzzle. This movement appears unconnected to human agency, and is apprehended as somewhere between magical and ghostly. This magical quality of technological development is contemplated by Orlando when she travels in the lift of the department store in Regent Street: "The very fabric of life now, she thought as she rose, is magic. In the eighteenth century, we knew how everything was done; but here I rise through the air; I listen to voices in America; I see men flying – but how it's done, I can't even begin to wonder. So my belief in magic returns" (207). Paradoxically, the marvellous level of technological development apparent in the present day returns Orlando to an archaic belief system, so great is her wonder at how such things can be achieved. Here, mental capacities to understand or conceptualise the new capabilities of the human body facilitated by technology seem to lag behind development. It is no surprise to find that the faculties of perception also take time to adjust to new forms of technological aid. Orlando experiences the information provided by her senses in a state of uncomfortable surprise: "It was a little alarming – this shrinkage. Everything seemed to have shrunk" (205). To just what this perception of "shrinkage" refers is never explained, although since she has just observed the horseless carriage, it can be presumed that she refers to the collapse of distances enabled by fast-paced, mechanised travel. Once driving her own motorcar, Orlando's perceptive faculties do certainly apprehend this shrinkage again, along with a sense of fragmentation in what she sees from the moving motorcar: "The old Kent Road was very crowded [. . .]. Streets widened and narrowed. Long vistas steadily shrunk together [. . .]. Nothing could be seen whole or read from start to finish. What was seen begun – like two friends starting to meet each other across the street – was never seen ended" (211-212). The sensory

bombardment of the city is experienced even more radically when the motorcar is already creating its own shredding and slicing of scenes, which are seen in fragments and snatches:

she pressed the self-starter and was off. Vast blue blocks of buildings rose into the air; the red cowl of chimneys were spotted irregularly across the sky; the road shone like silver-headed nails; omnibuses bore down upon her [. . .] she noticed sponges, bird-cages, boxes of green American cloth. But she did not allow these sights to sink into her mind even the fraction of an inch as she crossed the narrow plank of the present, lest she should fall into the raging torrent beneath (206-7).

The “plank of the present” again gestures toward the model of the in-rolling future, and suggests that a precarious present moment is found amidst such sensory overload. The “raging torrent” refers to the loss of this moment, and its similarity to the description of the Kingsway in *Night and Day* implies the difficulty of expressing, or placing into a coherent narrative order, the excess of information perceived by Orlando’s lagging faculties. That the motorcar in particular embodies the experience of the moment held out against the evisceration of contemporary life is underscored by a description of such travel in *Jacob’s Room*: “A motorcar came along the road shoving the dark before it . . . The dark shut down behind it” (106).

That the experience of motorcar travel is cinematic, and that the motion pictures provided by such travel create a sensory overload that poses a problem for the rendering of such experience in narrative is clear. Such moving pictures prompt questions about the nature of the self, the stability of identity, and the possibility of existing in the moment in a coherent fashion – all questions that are central to Woolf’s biographical project in *Orlando*. That a static picture offers a more stable notion of identity is indicated when Orlando says of the shop assistants in the department store that they “chose to let down the impervious screen of the present so that to-day they appeared shop assistants in Marshall and Snelgrove’s merely” (210). Such a perception is suggested by the narrative, itself under the influence of Orlando’s consciousness at this point, to be false. If static screens or freeze frames stabilise identity and hold the present, then moving pictures, provided by motorcar travel, will make identity problematic, and send the driver along a precarious plank of the present moment. That the freeze frame screen of the present is described as “impervious” suggests that the moving picture, by contrast, will be permeable in some way. It is this latter implication that indicates that urban motorcar travel can be seen to be cinematic in a haptic sense.



While time is inevitably important to a novel that attempts a peculiarly trans-generational biography, the motorcar scene brings questions of time together with those of space, just as the motorcar itself brings together issues of time and space in its unprecedentedly rapid traversal of geography. As Orlando herself notes in this scene: "it is a difficult business – this time-keeping; nothing more quickly disorders it than contact with any of the arts" (211). This statement is not further developed, but occurring as it does within this motorcar scene it seems reasonable to suggest that the arts in this period (the date of the scene is later revealed to be 11 October 1928) disorder timekeeping by creating spatialised narratives, just as Frank was to observe in his 1945 essay. Certainly travel experience within *Orlando* ruins a sense of linear history, and makes unsuitable a linear narrative. Orlando, realising that contemporary art, which creates her (as a character within Woolf's narrative) and which she creates (as herself a writer) is temporally problematic, turns to the space of her house in order to stabilise her identity. Noting that there are many Orlandos, which appear in different situations (212), and that the environment dictates which one will appear (213), she selects the environment that responds to her: "She fancied that the rooms brightened as she came in; stirred, opened their eyes [. . .] as if so long a life as theirs had stored in them a myriad moods which changed with winter and summer, bright weather and dark, and her own fortunes and the people's characters who visited them" (217-8). It is a connection to the past that provides this stability: "The gallery stretched far away to a point where the light almost failed. It was as a tunnel bored deep into the past" (219). Just as the shop assistants in Marshall and Snelgrove's hold up static screens in order to create deceptively stable identities, so Orlando, having lost any sense of a single self through the strange experience of motorcar travel, comes to rely on the freeze frame of her ancestral home in order to restore her sense of a coherent self.

In the later novel *The Years*, many of these concerns still cluster around the experience of mechanised transport: the threat to identity, the sense of the moment, the bombardment of the senses, the touching nature of the moving picture provided by such travel. That the streets of London are packed with traffic is vital to the sense conveyed in the novel that the season is in full swing; that civilised society is set in motion: "Down Park Lane and Piccadilly vans, cars, omnibuses ran along the streets as if the streets were slots; stopped and jerked; as if a puzzle were solved, and then broken, for it was the season, and the streets were crowded" (*Years* 130). While this description opens the chapter entitled "1910," the sense of crowding and hurry is evident in the depiction of London throughout the periods of the novel's consideration, which span from "1880" to the "Present Day." The

novel shares many concerns and stylistic methods that this chapter has identified as important within Woolf's work, and also within Richardson's. A cinematic moment of simultaneous scenes occurs when Eleanor phones Sara and speaks instead to North, who sets up the image of him and Sara dining together. The structure of the novel allows Eleanor's scene and the North/Sara scene to happen at the same time, by alternating between a description of each, and having both scenes recalled later in the novel with reference to their simultaneity. "'North is dining with Sara,' she said, smiling at the little telephone picture of two people at the other end of London" (261). Rose experiences a spatialised recollection that causes two scenes to happen in simultaneity in a way that recalls the thought patterns of Richardson's Miriam: "Her past seemed to be rising above her present. And for some reason she wanted to talk about her past" (*Years* 135). When Maggie and Sara, whom she is visiting, reminisce about their own past, itself tied very closely to her childhood home of Abercorn Terrace, "It puzzled her; it made her feel that she was two different people at the same time; that she was living at two different times at the same moment. She was a little girl wearing a pink frock; and here she was in this room, now" (135). Later, Eleanor's lack of attention at a meeting makes her feel that she is two people at once (142), while Kitty Lasswade's cousin in the box at the opera is having a related crisis of identity: "There was an odd look on his face as if he were in two worlds at once and had to draw them together" (150). In addition to these instances of layered spaces and identity crises, *The Years* shares the enthusiasm for the city found elsewhere in Woolf's writing, autobiographical and fictional. Eleanor simply states "I like walking in London" (240) in a way that recalls the passion of Woolf herself, Katharine Hilbery, Ralph Denham, Mary Datchet, Clarissa Dalloway and Peter Walsh.

The urban experience in *The Years* is again sensually overwhelming, and again Woolf uses aquatic imagery to denote this: "They were approaching Charing Cross. It was like the piers of a bridge; men and women were sucked in instead of water. [...] Omnibus after omnibus stopped, then swooped off again" (190). These are Martin's perceptions, and they echo those of Peter Walsh, where in *Mrs. Dalloway* Woolf writes: "cabs were rushing round the corner, like water round the piers of a bridge" (*Dalloway* 180). Martin is observing this rush of the flows of the city in 1914, by which time mechanised transport has become commonplace: "Then he looked at a car. It was odd how soon one got used to cars without horses, he thought. They used to look ridiculous" (190). This perhaps explains why, four years earlier, Martin had laughed at Kitty Lasswade for having a car (148). Back in 1914, Cole drives Kitty from the station, and observes of the dogs that wander in the road, placing

themselves in danger from passing cars: "They'll learn in time, m'lady" (220). Some have become used to cars faster than others, and Kitty notes that Cole coaxes the car up an incline inappropriately: "Kitty saw him jerk his body slightly backwards and forwards as if he were encouraging horses" (221). The crucial motorcar scene of the novel occurs in the "Present Day" chapter, and features North Pargiter's swift drive around the city, reflecting upon his recent experiences in Africa:

The noise of London still seemed to him deafening, and the speed at which people drove was terrifying. But it was exciting after Africa. The shops even, he thought, as he shot past rows of plate-glass windows, were marvellous. [. . .] Everywhere there was profusion; plenty. . . . Again the red light shone out; he pulled up.

He looked about him. He was somewhere in Oxford Street; the pavement was crowded with people; jostling each other; swarming round the plate-glass windows which were still lit up. [. . .] But the light was green again. On he jerked (248).

The noise of London overwhelms the ears, and the speed of the traffic causes fear, but the experience of city driving is exhilarating, as North is caught up in the capitalist spectacle of Oxford Street, whose finished goods contrast sharply with the raw goods of Africa (248). This scene largely functions to introduce the changes that have occurred in London in order to bring us to the present day, and some of the issues drawn out by motorcar travel in *Orlando* remain unexplored here. Instead, they surface when Kitty takes her long train ride to the North of England. Train travel draws questions of speed, space, time, moment and memory into the narrative:

The train rushed her on. The sound had deepened; it had become a continuous roar. [. . .] *Now* where are we? she said to herself. Where is the train at this moment? *Now*, she murmured, shutting her eyes, we are passing the white house on the hill; *now* we are going through the tunnel; *now* we are crossing the bridge over the river. . . . A blank intervened; her thoughts became spaced; they became muddled. Past and present became jumbled together. She saw Margaret Marrable pinching the dress in her fingers, but she was leading a bull with a ring through its nose. . . . This is sleep, she said to herself [. . .]. And she resigned herself to the charge of the train, whose roar now became dulled and distant (219).

While Kitty attributes the confusion of times to her impending sleep, it could equally be attributed to the experience of train travel itself. The instances she recalls are drawn from the party which she has attended (at which Margaret pinched the fabric of a dress) and memories from her youth (the bull being led). Travel has confused the linearity of her biographical memory. Her attempt to establish the moment in the fact of travel at speed is of course indicated by her frequent, vehement "*now*"s, but her thoughts become "spaced," simultaneous, despite her best efforts. The train does not of course present its customary

moving picture, since she is on a sleeper train and has retired to bed. Yet her memory fills in the journey for her, and the sights pass as they would were she looking out of the window; the white house, the tunnel and the bridge. The rhythmic repetition of the word “now,” and Woolf’s use of italics to create an emphasis on this word, generates the sound of the train passing over the tracks, which itself may bring about the moving picture contained in Kitty’s imagination.

Elsewhere in the novel, when mechanised transport is not involved, the spatialisation of identity is still at issue. During an air raid in the “1917” chapter several characters shelter in the cellar, and Nicholas begins an existential debate: “‘The soul – the whole being,’ he explained. He hollowed his hands as if to enclose a circle. ‘It wishes to expand; to adventure; to form – new combinations?’” (238). Nicholas seems to suggest that travel and expansion are necessary for the soul, the conclusion which Katharine and Ralph come to when walking in London at the conclusion of *Night and Day*. Later, North attempts a toast at a party, during which he articulates a dream that also has to do with spatial expansion. He wishes to “at the same time spread out, make a new ripple in human consciousness, be the bubble and the stream, the stream and the bubble – myself and the world together – he raised his glass” (329-330). The novel concludes with Eleanor’s thoughts on the nature of existence: “She held her hands hollowed; she felt that she wanted to enclose the present moment; to make it stay; to fill it fuller and fuller, with the past, the present and the future, until it shone, whole, bright, deep with understanding” (344). Her cupped hands recall Katharine Hilbery’s enigmatic revelation in the final scene of *Night and Day*: “the problem had been solved; she held in her hands for one brief moment the globe which we spend our lives in trying to shape, round, whole, and entire from the confusion of chaos” (*Night* 530). Eleanor concludes: “We’re only just beginning [. . .] to understand, here and there” (*Years* 343-4). Her statement has a double meaning, indicating that we understand in glimpses, here and there, and also that the concepts of “here” and “there” are only just beginning to be understood. Given the novel’s concern with the moment, and its relation to space through travel, this is a suitable conclusion for the text as a whole to come to via Eleanor, its overriding consciousness. In “Street Haunting...” Woolf writes: “Or is the true self neither this nor that, neither here nor there, but something so varied and wandering that it is only when we give rein to its wishes and let it take its way unimpeded that we are indeed ourselves?” (“Street” 8-9). In this way she suggests that only in travel can a sense of self be stabilised, a radical claim that seems to go against the discoveries of her own characters, although Katharine Hilbery moves some way towards it.

An apparently incidental description in *The Years* gives some indication as to the scale of the philosophical problems with which Woolf is attempting to engage in this novel. Describing a lady in Kensington Gardens, the narrative voice states: "The sun dappled the table and gave her a curious look of transparency, as if she were caught in a net of light; as if she were composed of lozenges of floating colours" (195). The description sounds like an abstract painting, with lozenges of colour standing in for a more traditionally figurative representation of the woman. Woolf's written art will likewise have to describe the new reality differently, to understand "here" and "there" and, often, mechanised passage between the two. When North recites a poem to Sara, an oblique indication is given as to what form this new descriptive mode will take in literary terms: "He began again. The words going out into the room seemed like actual presences, hard and independent; yet as she was actually listening they were changed by their contact with her" (272). Here, literature becomes tangible, and the moment of listening provides a connection between the words and their audience. Minow-Pinkney has suggested that "the link between motoring experience and aesthetic practices is not just a matter of trope or analogy but motoring, together with other experiences distinctive to the modern age of technology, affects the human sensory organization itself which, dissolving its linear cohesion, necessitates new modes of thought and aesthetic representation adjusted to it" (163). In this way mechanised transport, and in particular travel by motorcar, is a contemporary experience which alters the human perceptive faculties, as is borne out not only in Woolf's fiction, but in her autobiographical writings, including the diary entries in which she records her first encounters with such travel. Dissolving "linear cohesion," it presents problems in the narrative of personal biography, leading characters in Woolf's novels to question the status of their own identity, and their relation to time, space and the moment of "now." Bringing streams of moving pictures into these novels, motorcar journeys and other mechanised travels reflect the sensory bombardment of urban life, whether or not such travels occur within an urban context. As a result of all of these factors, "aesthetic representation" must adapt, and Woolf must find a way to figure motorcar travel that is as new as the experience, which she characterises as joyous, alarming and magical. Her aesthetic response is to use modes of depiction and description that owe a debt to the cinema, another of these perception-shifting contemporary technologies, and in doing so underscores the relationship between these two forms of moving picture: the screen and the motorcar window.

### **Modernist Haptic Texts**



Frank's "Spatial Form in Modern Literature," indebted to the German art historical tradition that first formulated the concept of the haptic in the aesthetic sphere, contends that if the conditions of human perception have changed within a given period, so the faculties of such perception will change, due to what Riegl would term a shift in the *kunstwollen*. As a result, the art that seeks to engage those perceptive faculties, and to ably express the contemporary environment, will also change. Benjamin suggests the tactile mode of aesthetic apprehension as the one central to the modernist period's *kunstwollen* (Benjamin 231). For Benjamin, the tactile mode, the haptic, was vital to an understanding of the cinema. Further, haptical cinema provided a route to understanding the relationship of human perception to the contemporary environment in the broadest sense, since "the tasks which face the human apparatus of perception at the turning points of history cannot be solved by optical means, that is, by contemplation, alone. They are mastered gradually by habit, under the guidance of tactile appropriation" (Benjamin 233). Exploring the haptic nature of the cinema, and seeing how modernist texts make use of cinematographic and haptic methods at the level of both content and form, provides a new perspective on these texts and the wider work of their authors. Time and again, the novels of Woolf and Richardson foreground physical experience, or metaphoric reference to such experience, depicting the touch of skin, kinaesthesia and inhabitation in the urban sphere. This preoccupation in Woolf's work makes critical claims of her aesthetic, anti-materialist focus problematic. Both Woolf and Richardson also rely on the emotionally or imaginatively touching. Finally, they make extensive use of travel, the (e)motional journeys of the technologically transformed modernist period. Physical touch, emotional touch and (e)motional travel are the three central concerns of Bruno's taxonomy of the haptic. Thus while Woolf and Richardson are fascinated by the cinema, their writing may be best understood as haptically cinematic, engaging with touch in the same fascinating manner as early cinema.

When Bruno places cinema within a trajectory of protocinematic development, and when she eschews a focus on the visual in favour of the tactile, she creates a common ground in which modernist cinema and modernist literature can, surprisingly, meet. Frank was therefore right to observe the elision of art forms and their modes of operation in the modernist period. Frank also observes that the work of Proust facilitates an experience on the part of the reader, since it is "at once the vehicle through which he conveyed his vision and the concrete substance of that vision shaped by a method which compels the reader to re-experience its exact effect" (237). The haptic enables modernist texts, and in particular

the work of Woolf and Richardson, to provide just such an experience for the reader, such that touch is not confined within the realm of the literary text itself. The literary haptic operates somewhere between a psychological or mental readerly experience of described space facilitated by this newly spatial modernist literature, and touching experience, engaging the emotions and the consciousness of the individual reader. Adding motion to the literary text always brings hapticity into play for both textual character and reader, highlighting the intimate connection between text and film at this time; a connection of which Woolf and Richardson, as writers engaged in thinking about the new form of the cinema, were very much aware. Movement, denoted by the prefix *kino-* that is also the German colloquial name for the cinema, is perceived by the kinaesthetically enabled body. Such a body, depicted within the modernist text, will be perceived by a reader possessing new aesthetic faculties and expectations as a consequence of a vital shift in the modernist *kunstwollen* toward the primacy of the haptic sense.

### **Conclusion: Modernist Literature and the Concept of Space**

Christopher Richard Wynne Nevinson's painting Among the Nerves of the World (fig. 6) depicts on canvas the bustle of Fleet Street around the time of its painting, thought to be 1928-1930. Nevinson manages to include cars, lorries, omnibuses and a steam train in his view, capturing the latter as it speeds across the bridge that provides a focus for the painting. The wires of telecommunication criss-cross the sky and subdivide the canvas, suggesting a fragmented perception of this urban scene. Pedestrians are channelled into flows along the pavements, blurred by their rapid movement. A few contend with the vehicles, which seem to have temporarily stalled in a traffic jam, such is the number of people on the move. The painting foregrounds this hectic vision of the contemporary commercial metropolis, leaving civic and religious buildings in the background. The crucial business of news-gathering and news-dissemination takes centre stage, as the newspaper offices are connected to the rest of the country, and the world, through the wires that bisect the painting. This depiction of Fleet Street as a node in a wider system or, rather, a nerve centre, echoes Mary and her co-workers' insistence on viewing their suffrage organisation in much the same way: "Mary felt, at last, that she was the centre ganglion of a very fine network of nerves which fell over England" (Night 79). The world has become subject to Orlando's "shrinkage" through

technological means (Orlando 205), making the reach of the newspaper nerve system geographically extensive.

H.G. Wells, writing on contemporary combat in 1917, states that “Only Mr. C.R.W. Nevinson could do justice to the interior of a Tank” (Wells 166). This association of Nevinson with the ability to express the modern age makes Among the Nerves of the World an apposite place to end a study of the modernist period. Nevinson underscores the painting’s focus upon Fleet Street by adding a typographical dimension to his work. The words “news,” “paper,” and “daily” can be made out on the right of the painting, reminding the viewer that “Sufficient for the day is the newspaper thereof” (Ulysses 176). Below these words, in darker paint, hovers what appears to be the word “advert,” making clear the link between the newspaper and advertising industries that was well established by this time, as Wareham Smith so carefully documented in Spilt Ink. Nevinson also reinforces the importance of technology in the gathering of news by having the fragment “tele” appear within the top left quadrant of the canvas. The fast pace of city life, the centrality of the newspaper to the city environment, the symbiotic relationship between newspaper text and advertising, and the role of technology in early twentieth century living are all thus recorded. The presence of typographical and overtly commercial elements in an oil on canvas work looks back to the anti-academicism of the cubists. The words are recorded not as part of a representational attempt to record Fleet Street, but as structural or compositional elements of the painting in their own right, contravening the laws of perspective. The space of the painting, its concrete form, eschews a realistic representation through the addition of these typographical elements, and they come to denote geometrical planes that are at odds with the architectural forms of the offices to which they ostensibly seek to refer. The interaction between the newspaper, its typography and the city at large is depicted, as fragments connected to newsprint escape into the streets, taking on their own architectural or constructive form. Typography interacts with concrete urban space, meaning that the concrete space of the painting’s own form is itself radical – a radicalism made possible by cubist experiments in painting in the previous two decades.

Nevinson’s work depicts, first and foremost, the sensory bombardment of the modernist city as most famously described by Simmel. Its vehicular and pedestrian flows recall Woolf’s aquatic city imagery. In order to depict the pace and flow of life at this time, Nevinson turns to Fleet Street, its ads, papers and texts. In doing so, his work acknowledges preceding artistic innovations. This thesis has attempted to explore the modernist period by

completing these depictions and investigations in reverse. Beginning with the cubists, the concept of space in a concrete and metaphorical sense is seen to be freed from the realms of geometry and becomes the potential subject of avant-garde cultural practice. The role of the newspaper in this cultural practice is highlighted by the pasted paper works of Picasso and Braque. The newspaper's own concrete and metaphorical spatial changes within the modernist period are considered, looking at the impact of this transformed medium of news-dissemination not only in the *papiers collés*, but in the canonical literary output of the modernist period. The important role of advertising in these changes to the newspaper's form and operation, highlighting the developing capitalist economic system and its textual and spatial impact, is then observed. The relevance of the changing newspaper and the ad for the guidance of the contemporary urban dweller is considered. Finally, the modernist city is itself explored, along with the challenge it offers to literary systems of representation. An analysis of the visual medium of the cinema and its modernist theorisations are seen to yield a focus upon the tactile sense that proves central to the representation of space in the avant-garde literature of Woolf and Richardson. Both Nevinson's painting and this thesis thus seek to draw attention to space, placing it alongside time as a vital means of understanding the modernist period. This thesis further suggests that shifts in the space concept are a crucial subject for any full analysis of the period. Whether such space is that of a concrete urban reality, the concrete form of a painting or text, the metaphorical register of the fourth dimension, of mental or psychological space, or of conceptual changes in the way in which contemporary life under capitalism is understood and artistically represented, this project has attempted to bring that space into relief as a temporarily isolatable element worthy of study.

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Figure 1. Pablo Picasso. *Les Femmes d'Alger (O. J.)*. 1907. Museum of Modern Art, New York.





Figure 2. Georges Braque. *Le Port (Harbour, Normandy)*. 1909. Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago.





Figure 3. Pablo Picasso. The Portrait of Ambrose Vollard. 1910. Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow

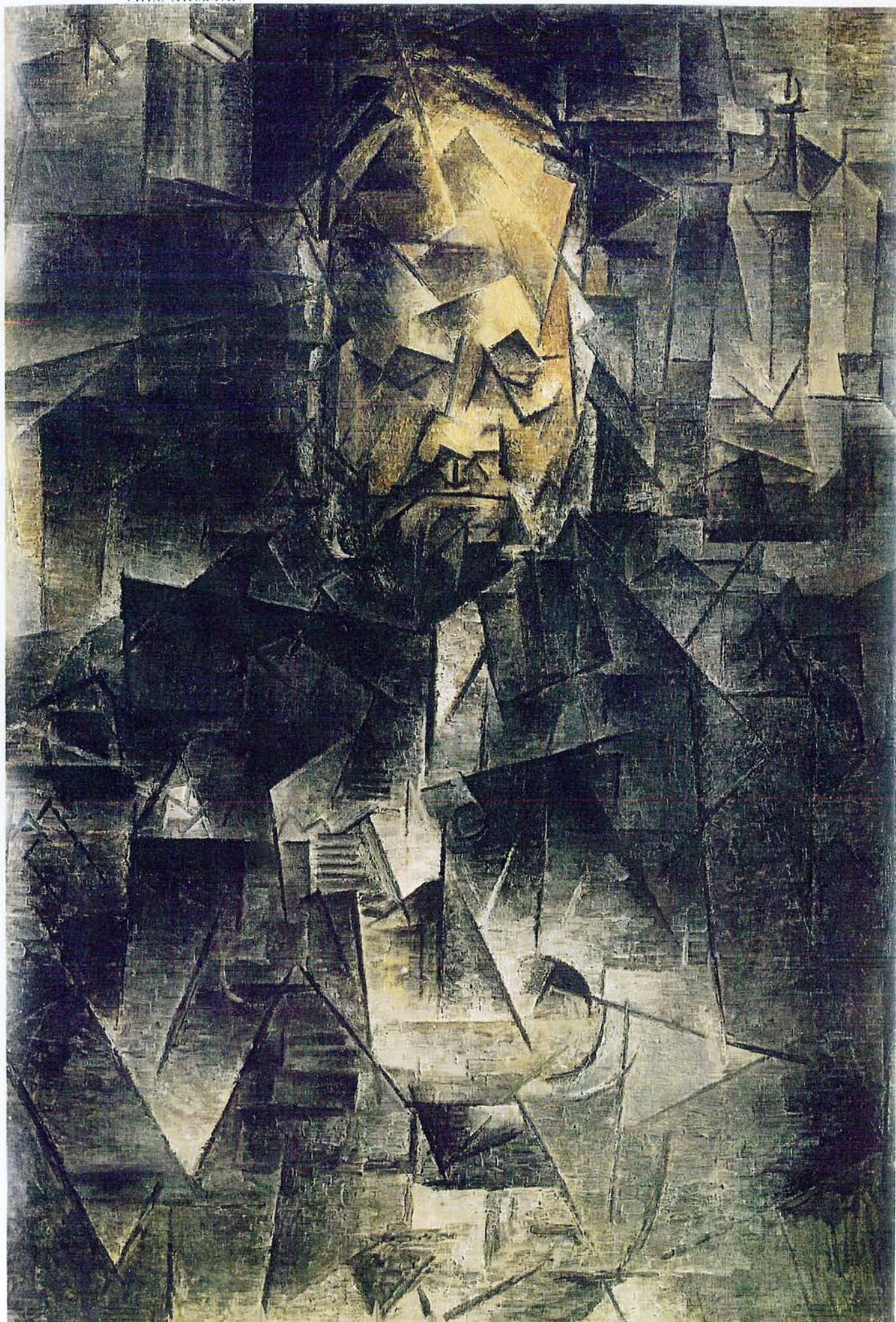




Figure 4. Georg Friedrich Bernhard Riemann. Geometry represented on a sphere. (qtd. in Henderson).

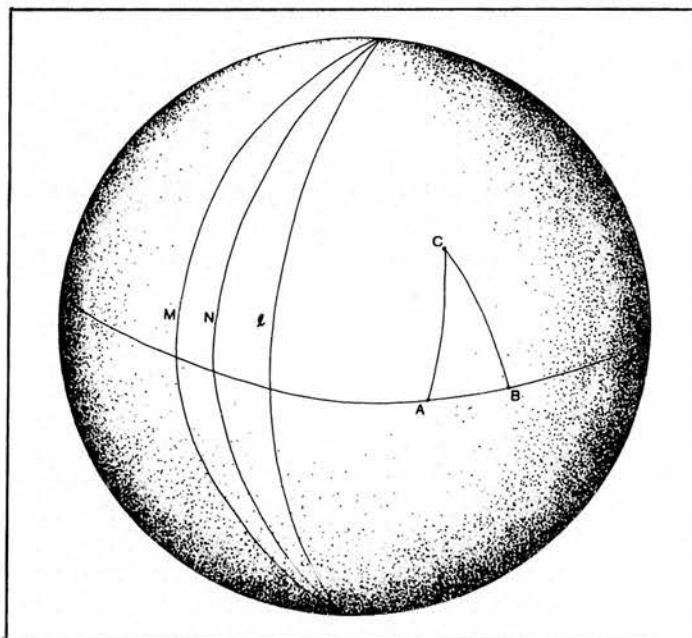




Figure 5. Pablo Picasso. Glass and Bottle of Suze. 1912. Washington University Gallery of Art, St. Louis.





Figure 6. Christopher Richard Wynne Nevinson. *Among the Nerves of the World*. 1928-1930. Museum of London, London.

